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ABSTRACT

The five State Urban Education C.E.C. programs in District 19 include Project Excellence, a recycled clinical program which provides diagnostic, referral, and educational service to elementary and junior school students who demonstrate some difficulty in their scholastic and/or emotional adjustment to school. In Operation Reading Success for Sixth Grade Students, State Urban Education funds provide for the training and services of eight paraprofessionals who assist in improving the reading skills of sixth graders in four District schools. A third project, the J.F.K. Supplementary Education Centers, is a recycled program which provides after-school and Saturday academic, vocational, social, recreational, cultural, and guidance services to students at eight District centers. The Responsive Environment Program provides remedial reading instruction to approximately 360 second and third grade students in the district by means of a "talking typewriter." The fifth State Urban Education project, The Administrative Component, is attached to the Office of the Assistant Superintendent in District 19. (Author/JM)

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FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION (CEC) PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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An evaluation of a New York City school district educational project funded by the New York State Urban Education Program enacted at the 1970 Legislative Session of the New York State Legislature for the purpose of "meeting special educational needs associated with poverty." (Education Law 3602, subdivision 11 as amended).

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

JOSEPH JUSTMAN, DIRECTOR

June 1971

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A long list of representatives of the schools in District 19 contributed to the findings presented in these reports; District Coordinators, Program Coordinators, Principals, Teachers, Paraprofessionals, and Students. To all of them, our gratitude for their patience and cooperation.

The Evaluation Team

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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION C.E.C. PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT"

Prepared by

PAUL SCHWEITZER
Evaluation Director

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JOSEPH JUSTMAN, DIRECTOR

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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION C.E.C. PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT"

I. INTRODUCTION

There are five State Urban Education C.E.C. programs in District 19. Responsibility for the implementation and coordination of these programs is assigned to the Director of the Administrative Component.

The projects in operation include Project Excellence, a recycled clinical program which provides diagnostic, referral, and educational services to elementary and junior high school students who demonstrate some difficulty in their scholastic and/or emotional adjustment to school. The project staff, including a coordinator, a teacher trainer, licensed academic teachers, two guidance counselors, a full-time psychologist, family acsistants and classroom assistants, have provided help to approximately six hundred District students.

In Operation Reading Success for Sixth Grade Students, State Urban Education funds provide for the training and services of eight paraprofessionals who assist in improving the reading skills of sixth graders in four District schools. A third project, the J.F.K. Supplementary Education Centers, is a recycled program which provides after-school and Saturday academic, vocational, social, recreational, cultural, and guidance services to students at eight District centers. Seventy professionals and forty-seven paraprofessionals comprise this project staff.

The Responsive Environment Program provides remedial reading instruction to approximately 360 second and third grade students in the district by means of a "talking typewriter." A coordinator, four teachers, twelve educational assistants, and two educational associates provide the services involved in the project. The fifth State Urban Education project, the Administrative Component, is attached to the Office of the Assistant Superintendent in District 19, and is the subject of this evaluation.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The following program objectives were cited by the district in the request for funding that was submitted:

1. To provide for the personnel and services needed for the planning, implementation, and supervision of State Urban Education programs.

2. To provide for the coordination of activities of all participating groups (professional staff, participating schools, community groups, vendors, and central Board of Education).

III. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURES

The objectives of the evaluative study that was undertaken paralleled the program objectives, and may be stated as follows:

1. Determination of the extent to which personnel and services were provided for planning, implementation, supervision, and coordination of the program.

2. Determination of the adequacy of personnel and services in planning, implementation, and supervision and coordination of the program.

IV. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The projects undertaken in District 19 were implemented and/or recycled for this year on the basis of suggestions made at a public hearing held in October of 1969. A similar hearing was held on March 22, 1971, to determine a plan of action for next year's State Urban C.E.C. projects. The suggestions voiced on these occasions were subsequently acted upon by the C.E.C. Advisory Committee. Representatives of the professional staff, of poverty agencies, of elected officials, of banks and businesses, of P.T.A. councils, the United Federation of Teachers, the Community School Board, and of ESEA Title I and of C.E.C. personnel comprise the membership of this committee, which meets monthly.

The effective operation of the projects is dependent upon the staff members involved. The selection of personnel is made by the individual project coordinators with the approval of the C.E.C. Director. The coordinators have met with the administrator over the course of this year to discuss project organization and evaluation. Additional communication with the project coordinators is accomplished through memoranda from and visits by the Director who, this year, has visited each of the State Urban Education C.E.C. projects in the district.

Comprehensive records of administrative and project activities are maintained in the office of the Director. These include copies of payroll data, time sheets, per diem substitute records, and per session records for professionals and paraprofessionals. The administrator is assisted in the maintenance of these by her office staff.

V. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

In the opinion of the evaluator, the Director of the State Urban Education Program in District 19 is doing an excellent job. One may single out for special commendation the following administrative practices:

1. Despite the handicap of inadequate space, the records are complete and accurate.

2. Excellent communication has been maintained with the coordinators, not only through the usual written channels, but through meetings and personal visits by the Director to every project in operation.

3. A high degree of morale has been created and maintained on the part of all personnel by the demonstrated concern of the Director.

The major problems that have arisen during the course of the school year were financial in nature, and resulted from the action of the New York State Legislature which reduced the funds allocated to State Urban Education programs.

As a result of this action, essential budget modifications, proposed summer projects, and plans for re-cycling the C.E.C. programs have come to a standstill until such time as a state enabling act releases the necessary funds for continuing operation. The impact of this action was so drastic

that the Advisory Committee, accompanied by the Director, made a trip to Albany to protest budget cuts that will seriously affect the operation of C.E.C. programs during the coming year. For as long as the crisis continues, priority will be given, in making budgetary allotments, to those projects which provide direct services to children in the District, particularly in the area of reading.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the State Urban Education C.E.C. Program in District 19 is operating at a very high level of efficiency and effectiveness, the following suggestions are offerred for consideration by District personnel:

1. Members of the Advisory Committee should participate in planned visits to C.E.C. programs on a shared basis.

2. Copies of minutes should be made available to all members of the group, including absentees.

3. More office space should be made available to the Director and her staff.

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
HARRY N. RIVLIN, DEAN

Function No. 69-1-7452

EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION C.E.C. PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"JOHN F. KENNEDY SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL CENTER"

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An evaluation of a New York City school district educational project funded by the New York State Urban Education Program enacted at the 1970 Legislative Session of the New York State Legislature for the purpose of "meeting special educational needs associated with poverty." (Education Law 3602, subdivision 11 as amended).

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

JOSEPH JUSTMAN, DIRECTOR

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EVALUATION OF THE STATE URBAN EDUCATION C.E.C. PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"JOHN F. KENNEDY SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL CENTERS"

I. INTRODUCTION

This program, a recycling of an existing program, was designed to extend the academic, vocational, social, recreational, and cultural experiences of children, youth, and adults residing within the District. Seven after-school centers and a Saturday center providing for supplementary educational activities were organized. Further enrichment of pupil experience was provided through a trip program that has been instituted on Saturday mornings. Counseling services were also provided.

The program was designed to raise the academic achievement and aspirational levels of the participants by capitalizing on their interests. It was hoped that through a process of self-selection of courses with a focus on creative arts, performing arts, and practical arts, and through provision of stimulating vocational experience with specialized preparation for high school and college, the needs of a large number of the residents of the community would be served. It was a further expectation of the program that effective and harmonious relationships would be established between the parents, school, and community by making a wide range of courses available to them. Parents and other community members were encouraged to participate in policy making and in evaluative decissions, and to utilize the augmented guidance services that were provided.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The following program objectives were cited by the district in the request for funding that was submitted:

1. To increase by at least four months, the reading and mathematics basic skills of participating pupils.

2. For non-English speaking students, ability to express themselves in simple English phrases and sentences will be developed.

3. For students enrolled in High School Equivalency classes, ability to perform on a fifth to eighth grade level will be developed.

4. For students enrolled in courses in the practical arts such as woodwork and photography, satisfactory ability to create group or individual project, to take, develop and enlarge photographs, etc., in accordance with criteria established by teachers for the particular course of study, will be developed.

5. For students in the creative and performing arts (piano, guitar, drama, dance, etc.), satisfactory ability to meet performance criteria established by teachers will be developed.

6. For students enrolled in courses in other academic areas, such as Business Skills, Electronics, etc., ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills attained will be developed.

III. EVALUATION DESIGN

Evaluation procedures that were utilized in the course of this study included observations, interviews, administration of questionnaires, rating scales, analysis of available records, and analysis of test results.

1. Observations

Site visits were made to each of the schools in the J.F.K. Center Program by the evaluation team. Attention was directed, during these visits, to the effectiveness of the program, the social relationships that were apparent, and to the degree and quality of pupil participation.

2. Interviews

The CEC and JFK Center Program Coordinator, center supervisors, the Guidance Counselor and a sample of teachers, paraprofessionals, and children were interviewed. Interviews lasted from ten minutes to one hour.

3. Questionnaires

All pupils and professional staff associated with the program, were asked to complete questionnaires.

4. Rating Scales

JFK staff members were asked to complete a number of rating scales designed to assess pupil growth and attitudes during the course of the instructional program.

5. Analysis of Available Records

Copies of all learning materials, brochures, minutes of meetings, letters, pupil-made materials, and previous evaluations were made available to the evaluation team.

6. Analysis of Test Data

In many of the centers, standardized achievement tests in reading were administered to children enrolled in reading laboratory groups in October and again in May. The same procedure was utilized in a smaller number of the mathematics classes. These results were made available to the evaluation team.

IV. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

A staff of 70 professionals and 47 paraprofessional personnel were assigned to this program. The professional personnel included a coordinator, an assistant coordinator, a practical arts supervisor, seven center supervisors, 49 teachers, seven teachers who served as trip guides, and one guidance counselor.

The seven centers operated three days per week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 3:15 to 5:15 P.M. All centers offered a variety of programs, which were based on the needs and interests of the particular community which the school serves. The number of teachers and paraprofessionals assigned to a given center depended on the number of courses offered. The majority of courses that were organized were presented in a two-hour sequence; some ran for a single hour. Students were permitted to enroll for a single two-hour course or for two one-hour courses.

The following schools were involved in the program: J64K, J166K, PI171K, I.S.218K, I.S.292K, J296K, I.S.302K. A Saturday center was also in operation at I.S. 292K.

The following courses were offered by these seven centers on the days indicated:

J64K - Arts and Crafts (F), Business Skills (M), Civil Service (W), Drama (F), Home Repair (F), Library (W), Music, Band (M,W,F), Music, Orchestra (M,F), Wood Sculpture (M,W), Sewing (F), Typing (W).

J166K - Copper Enameling (F), Dance, Ballet (M,W,F), Drama (M,W), Home Repair (M,W), Library (M), Math Team (M), Music, Guitar (W), Music, Winds (M,W,F), Photography (M,W,F), Printing (M,W,F), Reading Lab. (M,W).

P.I.171K - Fine Arts (M,W,F), Drama (M,W), Library (F), Music, Guitar (M,W,F), Music, Strings (W), Music, Winds (M,F), Reading Lab. (M,W), Typing (M,W,F).

I.S.218K - Ceramics (M,W), Electronics (M,F), General Crafts (F), Home Repair (M,W), Humanities (M), Jewelry (M,F), Library (F), Metalwork (M,F), Music, Guitar (W,F), Music, Orchestra (M,W), Music,Vocal (F), Photography (M,F), Printing (M,F), Reading Lab. (M,W,F).

I.S.29?K - Fine Arts (M,W,S), Art Metal and Jewelry (S), Arts and Crafts (M,W,F), Ceramics (W,F,S), Dance, Ballet (M,W,F,S), Dance, Modern (M,W,F,S), English as a Second Language (M), Film Production (W,F), High School Equivalency (M,W,F,S), Math, Pre-Algebra (M,W,F,S), Math, Prep for Special High Schools (M,W,F,S), Music, Electronic Piano (M,W,F,S), Music, Orchestra (M,W,F), Reading Lab. (M,W,F,S), Science Lab. (W,F,S), Typing (M,W,F,S), Stenography (S), Foods (S).

J296K - Fine Arts (M,W,F), General Crafts (M,F), Home Repair (M,F), Library (W), Mathematics Skills (M,W,F), Music,Orchestra (M,W,F), Reading Lab. (M,W,F), Science Lab. (M,W), Typing (W).

I.S.302K - Fine Arts (W), Clothing (W,F), Drama (W,F), Metal (M,W,F), Reading Lab. (M,W,F), Science Lab. (F).

As can be seen from the courses listed above, the program in each school was both extensive and varied. Some of the courses offered were unique to a given school; others, such as the Reading Lab. and Library programs were organized in all of the centers.

For the most part, there were only minor changes in the program as it was originally envisaged. The total number of classes first organized in reading and mathematics skills, African history and in English as a Second Language was reduced somewhat, occasioned largely by lagging pupil attendance in these areas, despite extensive efforts to promote attendance in the communities served by the centers. On the other hand, it proved to be necessary to establish additional classes in practical and fine arts, because of keen student interest.

The extremely late date at which the program was approved for funding made the task of organizing the program exceedingly difficult. For example, the current program was approved only on June 28, 1970, although the program was scheduled to begin on July 1, 1970. This short lead time, of course, was manifestly unfair to all personnel charged with responsibility for program implementation.

Funds available for operation of the program were reduced for the 1970-1971 school year. This entailed considerable additional planning for members of the staff.

There was a lengthy delay in payment of bills of vendors and salaries of paraprofessionals. The indications are that this difficulty was attributable to the procedures mandated by the Central Board of Education, rather than to the District or the JFK Center Program.

V. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

In view of the great variety of courses that were offered in the JFK Center program, any attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of each course would be manifestly impossible. Rather, an attempt is made here to provide an evaluation of the total program, by directing attention to those factors, important to an estimate of effectiveness, that apply to many of the individual courses that were organized.

1. Pupil Enrollment and Attendance

It should be noted that pupil turnover in the JFK Center program was extremely high. Analysis of the records made available by the Center directors indicates that there was almost a 100 per cent turnover.

Because of the high rate of turnover, data regarding pupil attendance is not too meaningful. Yet, such data would give some indication of the drawing power of each activity and, in this sense, is of value for program planning. Attendance data for the weeks of November 30, 1970 and April 26, 1971 were gathered, and are given below, for each school and each course. In each instance, the first number represents attendance in the earlier week, the second number attendance later in the year.

J.H.S. 64 - Arts and Crafts: 16, 14; Business Skills: 7, 6; Civil Service: 21, 18; Drama: 19, 46; Home Repair: 15, 12; Library: 18, 13; Band: 22, 19; Orchestra: 27, 22; Vocal Music: 26, 9; Printing: 13, 17; Reading Lab.: 19, 10; Sculpture: 16, 12; Sewing: 9, 17; Typing: 20, 10.

J.H.S. 166 - Copper Enameling: 23, 11; Dance: 35, 24; Drama: 13, 8; Home Repair: 14, 8; Library: 23, 12; Guitar: 30, 10; Wind Instruments: 39, 35; Photography: 16, 14; Reading Lab.: 10, 12.

P.I. 171 - Fine Arts: 19, 20; Drama: 16, 10; Library: (Reading Lab.) 20, 23; Guitar: 16, 18; Strings: 12, 17; Wind Instruments: 16, 12; Typing: 23, 18.

I.S. 218 - Ceramics: 21, 14; Electronics: 13, 8; General Crafts: 12, 10; Home Repair: 19, 15; Humanities: 14, 10; Library: 15, 21; Guitar: 18, 18; Strings: 22, 20; Vocal Music: 15, 11; Photography: 19, 15; Printing: 13, 10; Reading Lab.: 10, 11.

I.S. 292 (Day) - Fine Arts: 18, 13; Arts and Crafts: 13, 11; Ceramics: 15, 16; Dance: 50, 74; English as a Second Language: 12, 10; Film Production: 5, 10; Library: 15, 12; Mathematics: 14, 10; Piano: 16, 14; Orchestra: 18, 4; Reading Lab.: 12, 14; Science Lab.: 18, 10; Typing: 28, 25.

I.S. 292 (Saturday) - Fine Arts: 30, 15; Art Metal: 22, 16; Ceramics: 18, 23; Dance: 75, 68; Foods: 18, 16; Mathematics: 8, 11; Piano: 16, 16; Reading Lab.: 16, 15; Science Lab.: 37, 14; Typing: 25, 21.

I.S. 302 - Fine Arts; 11, 13.

This listing, it should be noted, is not complete. In some instances, data were not available in a given course for one of the two weeks during which attendance was taken. In any given week during the course of the year, approximately 4,000 pupils participated in programs under way.

These pupils represented a cross-section of the community. Available data indicates that approximately 51 per cent of the pupils attending were black, 34 per cent were Puerto Rican or had Latin American surnames, and the remainder were Caucasian or Oriental.

An attempt was made to determine whether attendance in the JFK Center program was carried over to the regular school day. However, only 13 of the regular classroom teachers of children participating in the program responded to a question asking for a reaction concerning a possible carry-over effect. Although the response was limited, all of the respondents agreed that the classroom work and classroom conduct of pupils regularly attending the JFK Centers was either "much improved" or "somewhat improved."

It is evident that the program did succeed in reaching a large number of pupils, and that attendance was good, even though turnover was extremely high. There is some indication that participation in Center activities was conducive to improved class work.

2. Analysis of Test Data

A total of 119 pupils, 107 (90%) of whom were reading below grade level when they entered the program, were present when alternate forms of the Metropolitan Reading Test was administered in October, 1970 and in May, 1971. The median growth shown by this group of pupils over the eight month period was nine months. Only eight of the students failed to show a gain in reading. Thirty-one of the participants showed improvement of one year or more.

Only 13 students were present for pre- and post-testing in mathematics. Ten of these pupils showed improvement of one year or better on alternate forms of the Metropolitan Arithmetic Test.

For those students who were in continual attendance in the program, achievement could be considered as reflecting normal progress, and the objective of the program can be considered as having been met.

It is of particular interest to note the progress of those students who were enrolled in the high school equivalency classes, which were conducted in two schools. Approximately 20 students participated in these classes on a more or less regular basis; since the students were adults with home responsibilities, attendance was bound to be less than perfect. Thirteen of these students, approximately 65 per cent of the group, showed gains in reading of five months or more on a pre-test post-test basis.

3. Teacher Ratings of Pupil Progress

In order to determine pupil growth in the non-academic areas in which courses were organized, teachers were asked to rate pupil progress on a five-point scale: excellent, good, fair, little, very poor. A summary of teacher ratings, by Center, is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

TEACHER RATING OF PUPIL PROGRESS IN NON-ACADEMIC COURSES

		Excellent		Good		Fair		Little		Very Poor	
School	No.	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
64K	298	69	23.1	73	24.5	122	40.9	26	8.7	8	2.8
292K	493	156	31.6	133	27.0	133	27.0	57	11.5	14	2.9
166K	162	66	41.2	35	21.6	39	24.1	21	13.0	1	0.1
218K	214	83	38.8	63	29.4	64	29.9	4	1.4		
171K	163	40	24.1	39	24.0	68	42.2	12	7.3	4	2.4
296K	178	30	16.8	60	33.6	73	41.0	15	8.6		
302K	90	43	47.7	29	32.2	13	14.4	5	5.5		
Total	1598	487	30.5	432	27.0	512	32.0	140	8.8	27	1.7

Ratings were obtained for 1,598 pupils. Of these, 487 were assigned ratings of "excellent" and 432 were assigned ratings of "good." These ratings were assigned to 57.5 per cent of the students, well below the 75 per cent level set as a quality indicator if the program was to have been considered effective. This 75 per cent criterion was achieved in only one school, that in which the smallest number of students were rated. It may very well be that the high degree of pupil turnover was a major factor contributing to these disappointing results.

On the other hand, it is important to note that only 10.5 per cent of the pupils rated were considered to have shown "little" or "very poor" growth, as opposed to the much larger proportion who achieved "good" or "excellent" ratings. In the judgment of the evaluation team, the standard of effective performance, in view of the nature of the program, was set at much too high a level.

Teachers were also asked to rate their pupils in terms of changes noted in their attitude to self and school. Again, a five-point rating scale was used:

1. Has shown a markedly more positive attitude
2. Has shown a moderately more positive attitude
3. Has not shown any change in attitude
4. Has shown a moderately more negative attitude
5. Has shown a markedly more negative attitude

A summary of the proportion of the pupils to whom the ratings of "markedly more positive" or "moderately more positive" were assigned is presented in Table 2. A copy of the scale used appears in the Appendix.

TABLE 2

PREPORTION OF PUPILS IN PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS TO WHOM RATINGS INDICATIVE OF POSITIVE CHANGE IN ATTITUDE WERE ASSIGNED

School	64	292	166	218	171	296	302	Total
Number Rated	265	555	158	143	194	186	97	1598
Attitude to Self								
1. Happy, relaxed	93	86	92	94	78	87	93	82
2. Try new things	61	68	37	41	57	57	30	56
3. Independence	51	52	59	56	38	47	48	50
4. Peer relations	72	81	66	68	59	63	71	71
5. Confidence	68	73	59	64	66	58	66	67
6. Dress, appearance	80	79	82	86	76	78	68	79
7. Pride in work	90	89	96	92	79	93	84	83
8. Outgoing	88	92	88	78	90	91	81	89
9. React. to frustration	80	85	90	78	82	86	82	84
10. Leadership	38	50	27	32	26	24	40	38
Attitude to School								
1. Cooperation	96	92	88	79	93	90	85	91
2. Accept criticism	88	94	89	87	86	92	89	83
3. Completes work	77	78	69	72	82	66	80	76
4. Attendance	80	83	79	82	78	76	74	80
5. Behavior	78	82	72	77	86	69	79	79
6. Courtesy	76	83	71	78	89	63	81	78
7. Accept limitations	77	85	72	78	87	65	80	79
8. Attention	86	90	80	90	80	87	89	87
9. Satisfaction	90	95	90	91	92	93	87	86
10. Participation	77	75	77	73	62	58	74	72

If the ratings of teachers may be utilized as a valid criterion, it is evidently that the program was markedly effective in developing positive attitudes toward school. More than 75 per cent of the pupils rated showed more positive attitudes in nine of the ten items that constituted this section of the total scale. The only item that fell below the 75 per cent level set as the criterion for program effectiveness was that dealing with "enthusiastic participation in class activities."

In the area of Attitude to Self, it proved to be much more difficult to effect positive changes. Here, the 75 per cent criterion was met in five of the ten items comprising the subscale. Only 38 per cent of the pupils were considered to have "shown leadership qualities;" 50 per cent were judged to be capable of "working independently without needing undue attention;" 56 per cent were looked upon as "liking new things;" 67 per cent were considered "to feel confident in their abilities;" and 71 per cent "got along well with their classmates." It would appear, in this area, that a good start has been taken in the direction of development of more positive attitudes on the part of the pupils, but that much more remains to be done.

4. Class Observation

In the course of the several visits made to each of the schools involved in the JFK program, the members of the evaluation team were greatly impressed by the enthusiasm shown by the students and faculty. Rapport between teachers and pupils was excellent. Few discipline problems were noted in the classes, although, in some schools, children from the after school athletic program appeared to interfere with JFK pupils as they passed in the halls.

Students generally arrived in class on time and began work promptly. During the winter months, some pupils left early, because their parents did not want them to walk home after dark. Perhaps because of this, it was noted that some classes in some of the centers were terminated before five o'clock. By March and April, however, observation indicated that this situation no longer existed. Obviously, the JFK administrative staff had taken the steps necessary to rectify this situation.

The members of the evaluation team, too, were impressed by the wide variety of projects available to the children in any given class, and by the quality of the work done by the pupils. Supplies were generally ample, particularly in the beginning stages of the program. By April, however, both teachers and students began to complain that supplies were beginning to run out.

It is extremely difficult to single out specific programs for special mention, but the Dance class conducted at P.S. 292K was particularly outstanding. The class attracted a very large number of participants and observers; many of the latter were parents of the children in the class. Both parents and children took great pride in the accomplishments of the class.

5. Pupil Reactions

A total of 552 students enrolled in the JFK program either completed questionnaires or were interviewed by members of the evaluation team concerning their reactions to the program. Of these, 409 (92.37%), indicated that they had developed a more positive attitude toward school as a result of the program. Most of the students cited the freedom of choice in selecting a course, the voluntary nature of the program, and good rapport

with teachers and administrators, and the availability of non-academic subjects as prime factors for their positive response. Many of the students indicated that they had learned that school work, which many of them formerly looked upon as drudgery, could indeed be fun. The positive effect of the program on participating students is illustrated by the fact that more than three-fourths (77.6%) of them indicated that they would recommend that their friends enroll in the program next year.

6. The Role of the Paraprofessional

The paraprofessional assigned to the program performed a variety of tasks: hall patrol, registration, attendance, distribution and collection of equipment, supervision of small groups of pupils, liaison with parents and community groups. Teachers were generally very pleased with the contribution made by the paraprofessionals. The latter generally viewed the program very positively. Only one of the 27 respondents to a questionnaire found any major fault with the program.

7. Culminating Activities

On May 28, a Practical Arts Exhibition was organized, followed by a Dance Festival on June 5 and 6 and a district-wide exhibit during the week of June 7. All of these functions were attended by students, faculty, parents, and community members. The quality of the work on exhibit and the quality of pupil performance constituted ample evidence that the students had learned many of the basic skills in the practical and fine arts.

VI. PROGRAM STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Program Strengths

1. The program was well organized, and administration of the program was excellent. Too often, once a program has been developed, the pattern is maintained, in spite of need for change. In this instance, administration was flexible, and changes were made to meet the needs of program participants.

2. A wide variety of courses was offered by the program; the organization of courses in a given center was based upon a preliminary survey of interests and needs in the community serviced.

3. The insight shown in the selection of courses for each center is evidenced by the very large number of students who were enrolled; an average of 4,000 persons per week made use of center facilities.

4. The establishment of a center that operated on Saturdays was a markedly positive aspect of the program. The organization of Saturday courses facilitated involvement of adults who could not attend courses during the week.

5. Students uniformly expressed positive attitude toward the program. In particular; the Saturday Trip Program and the Dance Program generated considerable enthusiasm on the part of participating children and adults.

6. Evidently, the budget for the program was carefully drawn. There was careful supervision to insure that funds were expended wisely.

7. Unlike many programs of this type, adequate supplies were available for development of a meaningful and productive program, although some difficulties were noted late in the program.

8. Program personnel, wherever possible, enlisted the support of community agencies.

9. Utilization of paraprofessionals in the program was excellent.

10. There was no hesitancy on the part of the program administrators to replace teachers whose services were unsatisfactory.

11. The program was markedly effective in developing more positive attitudes toward school, and moderately effective in developing more positive attitudes to self.

12. The program culminated in a series of activities that aroused considerable parent and community interest.

Program Weaknesses

1. In some centers, the position of center supervisor was shared by more than one licensed supervisor. This division of responsibility, of course, created difficulties.

2. Although enrollment in the program was not restricted, in that children from all public, parochial, and private schools in the district are eligible to attend courses, the number of parochial and private school children who were involved in the program was relatively low.

3. The same comment can be made concerning the enrollment of adults in the program. Although those who have availed themselves of the opportunity to enroll were uniformly positive in their response to the program, the number of adult participants tended to be small.

4. Understandably, program personnel were loathe to turn away prospective enrollees; as a consequence, some class registers were permitted to grow too large. In these instances, the amount of individual attention that could be given to the students enrolled was limited.

5. Pupil mobility tended to be high. This, of course, made it difficult to provide continuity.

6. In one center, it was felt that the nature of the supervision provided by the Center Supervisor could be more continuous and more effective.

7. It was felt that teachers of academic subjects had inadequate opportunity to work with students on an individual basis in order to diagnose and provide for remediation.

8. Efforts should be made to provide for a greater number of classes in reading, mathematics, high school equivalency, English as a Second Language, and electronics. The dramatic results achieved by the non-academic classes should not be permitted to limit the organization of more academic classes, for which the need is very great.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In the opinion of the evaluators, the J.F.K. Supplementary Educational Centers are performing an outstanding service for the communities in which they are located. The program should be recycled.

2. Within the limits of budget allotments, an attempt should be made to increase the number of academic classes, if at all possible, without reduction of the number of non-academic classes.

3. The CEC Coordinator and the J.F.K. Program Coordinator should be given greater authority to modify program procedures. While it is understandable that central administrative controls are necessary, the two individuals involved here have amply demonstrated their ability to function without the usual restraints, which so often introduce undue delays in program modification.

4. It is imperative that notification of funding be early enough to permit proper organization of the program.

5. The coordinator of a given program should be permitted to purchase supplies and pay for them. This would eliminate the long delay in payment presently experienced by vendors. In all probability, too, the program coordinator could purchase more supplies at a lower cost than is presently the case.

6. Steps must be taken to improve payroll procedures to make certain that paraprofessionals are paid promptly. This has been a recurrent inadequacy in many programs in which paraprofessionals are utilized, and it is high time that a system was instituted to provide prompt payment.

7. In order to insure program continuity, efforts should be made to assign only one person to function as Center Supervisor. Division of this responsibility among more than one person is unwise.

8. Efforts to enlist enrollment of parochial and private school children and of adults should be intensified.

9. Efforts should also be made to attract greater numbers of students to classes in African History and to high school equivalency classes.

10. Additional resources should be allocated to the Saturday Trip Program, which was enthusiastically received by students and community.

11. Consideration should be given to scheduling of classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Attendance on Friday tended to be lower than on the other days of the week.

12. Provision should be made for increased communication between JFK personnel and the classroom teachers of pupils enrolled in the program.

13. It might be helpful if additional orientation sessions were organized, particularly for new Center personnel, prior to the beginning of the program.

14. Present criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the program should be modified. It is unrealistic to expect 75 per cent of the participants to perform at an above average level, even in an informal program of this type.

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION (CEC) PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"RESPONSIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM"

Prepared by

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Evaluation Director

An evaluation of a New York City school district educational project funded by the New York State Urban Education Program enacted at the 1970 Legislative Session of the New York State Legislature for the purpose of "meeting special educational needs associated with poverty." (Education Law 3602, subdivision 11 as amended.)

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

JOSEPH JUSTMAN, DIRECTOR

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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION (CEC) PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"RESPONSIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM"

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Since 1960 when Dr. Omar K. Moore demonstrated the efficacy of teaching pre-schoolers to read through the medium of a "Talking Typewriter," this computer-based instrument has been viewed as a possible means for improving and individualizing reading instruction, particularly for beginning readers and older retarded readers. Improved models of the instrument have been installed in a number of cities in the country. The largest installation, 20 units, was established in 1967 in School District 19, in the East New York section of Brooklyn.

The project was located in a commercial building at 2560 Linden Boulevard in an effort to foster close communication between the community, the parents, and the schools. The name Responsive Environment Program (REP) was given to the instructional program which combined the use of the "Talking Typewriter" (technically, the Edison Responsive Environment Learning System) with coordinated on-site classroom instruction. The program operated during the normal school year, in after-school hours, and during the summer. One of the objectives of the program was to train qualified individuals from the community as educational assistants.

For the first two years of the project (1967-68 and 1968-69), a Head Start class (pre-kindergarten) and a kindergarten class were housed on the premises. Instruction was also provided to first and second grade pupils; retarded readers from upper elementary grades, junior and senior high schools and from parochial schools; youngsters referred by social agencies; and illiterate adults.

In 1969 and 1970, REP was funded by the State Urban Education Program. This report is concerned with REP as it functioned during the school year 1970-1971.

The 1970-71 Program

As approved for the year 1970-71, REP was "to provide individualized intensive remedial reading instruction utilizing computer-based Talking Typewriters and reinforcement activities in a related classroom" to a total of eight second and third grade classes, one from each of eight schools.

The eight schools selected were those within a 10-minute bus ride from the center and in greatest need of remediation: Public Schools 149, 158, 159, 174, 182, 202, 213, 245. Each school was to select a class from among those in greatest need of help.

Each of the eight schools was to send 28 children to the center, a total of 224 second and third grade pupils. One hour of regular school time was to be set aside for attendance, including traveling. Forty minutes were to be devoted to instruction; half of the time at the Talking Typewriter and half in the related classroom. Pupils who showed evidence of having made substantial progress were to be tested. Upon reaching grade level they were to be returned to their regular settings and other pupils accepted.

Provision for staff included: 1 coordinator (a Board of Education licensed supervisor), 4 licensed teachers, 14 paraprofessionals (educational assistants and educational associates), and 1 stenographer. One of the teacher positions was designated that of program writer. Provision was also made for substitute teacher and substitute paraprofessional service in cases of absence.

The project staff was to administer appropriate levels of the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test to the pupils on admission to the program and in June. Individually administered diagnostic tests and informal measures were also to be used.

Project Objectives

The general goals of the program were as follows: (1) to bring the second and third grade children participating in the program up to, or as near as possible to, grade level in reading; and (2) to prevent a disproportionate reading lag in grade 4.

Standards were set for evaluating the program. The program would be judged effective if the following criteria were met.

1. At the end of nine months of participation, the participants were to be able to demonstrate at least six months gain in reading skill as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test.
2. Ten per cent of the pupils who remained in the program for nine months were to demonstrate at least one year gain in reading skill.
3. Spanish-speaking pupils in categories C-F were to develop a working knowledge of the English language and be able to read on primer grade level.

4. The program was to develop greater motivation for and interest in reading.

5. Seventy-five per cent of last year's third-grade participants were to maintain a six month or more rate of growth in reading in grade 4.

II. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

A variety of procedures were utilized in this evaluation:

General Procedures

1. The normal operations of the project were observed over the period of the school year.

2. The children were observed as they participated in the various activities.

3. Instructional materials were examined.

4. Children's individual record folders were inspected.

5. Interviews were conducted with the project staff regarding functions, procedures, schedules, materials, children's progress, problems, and the like.

6. Interviews were conducted with the eight teachers accompanying their classes to the center, and with five of the six home paraprofessionals who also regularly accompanied the class, with regard to such matters as duties at the center, evidences of children's learning, coordination of REP with the home program, reactions of parents, and the like.

7. A random sample of 40 children (20 boys, 20 girls) from the eight classes were interviewed. Among the questions asked were: How do you like this place? Does this place help you? Do you like to go to the typewriter room or this room (the REP classroom) better?

What programs do you like best?

8. The project attendance records were studied.

9. The project teachers were asked to rate foreign speaking children on their use of English on admission and at the end of the program using the Board of Education's "Instructions for Grading Non-English Speaking Pupils." The project teachers also were asked to indicate for each pupil whether or not he had reached primer reading level by June.

10. In June, the home teachers of the eight classes were asked to rate each of their pupils on a scale of 1 to 5 (1-poor, 2-fair, 3-good, 4-very good, 5-excellent) for growth during the year in each of the following areas: motivation and interest in reading, attitude toward self, attitude toward school, attitude toward other children, and work habits.

11. Standardized test results were analyzed.

Procedures With Standardized Tests

1. Toward the end of September and before the first session of REP on October 5, 1970, the project staff administered the Metropolitan Primary I Reading Test, Form A, to the selected second and third grade classes in their home classrooms. Late in June, the staff administered the Primary I Reading Test, Form C, to the second grade pupils and the Upper Primary Reading Test, Form C, to the third grade pupils. The gains made by the children were determined, and evaluated against the criteria for program effectiveness that had been established. Gains for boys and for girls were compared.

2. Utilizing the availability of citywide test results for all third grade pupils in the schools, a comparison was undertaken of the progress of the third grade children in the program and the progress of third grade pupils who were not in the program. The third grade children in the program were matched with third grade children from two other low ranking classes in their school on the basis of sex and their score on the end second grade citywide reading test. The gains shown by the REP group on the third grade citywide test were compared with the gains made by the control group. From the available pool of children with complete test data in the two schools involved, 26 matched pairs were possible.

The test used in the second grade citywide reading survey of April 1970 was the 1961 edition of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests, Upper Primary, Form B. The tests used in the April 1971 third grade survey was Elementary, Form F, of the 1970 edition. Because new norms were involved in the 1970 edition, the children's grade equivalents were adjusted in conformance with the conversion table provided by the publisher.

3. One of the classes included in the project was a first grade class. The class was composed entirely of children of age for the first grade but without kindergarten experience. These children were not pre-tested in the program but, is with the second grade pupils, the Primary I Reading Test, Form C, was administered to them in June.

In asmuch as no criteria had been planned for evaluating the progress of such a class, a random sample of 31 children was drawn from two other heterogenously organized first grade classes in the same school. The latter children also took the Primary I reading test in June, and the performance of the two groups were compared.

4. Project specifications also called for a follow-up into the fourth grade of the third grade participants of 1969-70. The reading test grades obtained by those children in the fourth grade citywide reading survey of April 1971, employing the Metropolitan Elementary Test, Form C, were compared with the Metropolitan scores that they had obtained in the program at the end of the third grade. The test gains they made since leaving REP were evaluated against the criterion set for this group. Complete test data from the five schools involved were available for 64 children.

III. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Physical Environment

The project was located on the second floor of a two-story commercial building in an attractive suite of offices, reception rooms, and workrooms. A security system was in operation to prevent the intrusion of outsiders. The 20 typewriter booths, each with its own small computer, were located on the periphery of the laboratory. These one-way vision booths were soundproof, with an individual audio system for communication between instructor and student. There were two classrooms, hereinafter referred to as skills materials workshops, each the size of a large school classroom. There were separate reception rooms for the arriving class and for the departing class with provisions for the children's wraps.

The suite was carpeted and air conditioned. Lighting was indirect. The walls were painted in soft colors and were attractively decorated. In June, a large mural presented by one of the classes, depicting the children's bus trip to the center and their activities there, was placed in the corridor.

Staff

The program specifications for staff were met, but there were some shortages in personnel services. The staff consisted of 4 licensed teachers, 14 paraprofessionals, 1 stenographer, and a coordinator. Of the four teacher positions provided, one was listed as that of program writer. The actual amount of teacher time assigned to program writing was, however, less than that of a full teacher. The work of program writing was divided between two teachers who had to devote a major portion of their time to supervision of the laboratory so that all periods of the day might be covered. Thus, less total teacher time was devoted to program production than the one budget position specified.

The specifications also called for the services of substitute personnel in case of absence, but no funds were appropriated for this purpose at the start. Additional funds for a substitute teacher were not obtained until mid-year. With regard to a substitute paraprofessional, the coordinator reported that there was no such position. He therefore submitted a request for budget modification to enable him to employ an educational assistant four hours a day. This request was not granted until March 9th.

Also, the project proposal called for the use of 20 "Talking Typewriters." However, only 14 were employed at any one time. Four were unused every period because there were not enough educational assistants to take care of more than 14 children. Two typewriter booths were reserved for encoding and producing programs.

The professional and paraprofessional members of the staff were found to be a devoted, hard-working group with an understanding of children. They were skilled, flexible, and experienced. The paraprofessionals, a multi-ethnic group, drawn from the neighborhood, were highly trained and competent. They were equipped to serve in either the computer lab or the materials workshops. Many were skilled in the processes of computer program production. Most had served with REP since its inception in 1967.

The project coordinator integrated and supervised the operations of the center. He was in constant communication with the staff. He guided and supervised computer program production. He gave fatherly encouragement to the children. Some of the children reported to him regularly, others he sought out.

The coordinator conducted staff meetings and meetings with home-school personnel, and he maintained close relationships with the schools, the district office, and parent organizations. Parents, individually and in groups, visited the center, in some instances accompanying their children and the teacher on the bus. Relationships among the staff and with the community appeared to be harmonious.

Changes in the Program

The program was planned to serve children in the second and third grades only. In order to arrange the daily schedule to fit the schedules at the various schools, however, the first time period beginning at 8:20 A.M. had to be filled by a class that was on early session. The only class available for this time slot was a first grade class at P.S. 159. Thus, the eight classes served by the center were: 5 second grade classes, one each from P.S. 149, 158, 174, 182, 213; 2 third grade classes from P.S. 202 and P.S. 345; and the first grade class from P.S. 159.

Another change in program arose from the staff's attempt to keep the facilities of the center in full operation. The rate of absence among the children was very high; when they did not report to the center, equipment and materials were unused. Each school was therefore asked to select as alternates, in the number usually absent each day, children from the same class or from other classes so that, as far as possible, the center could serve 28 children from that school daily. These alternates were given the same attention and instruction as the other children and, if they were from the same class were indistinguishable from the others. Replacements were also obtained for the many children who moved during the year and were discharged from school.

The practice of discharging from the program children who reached "grade level" did not work out. Two children who scored at "grade level" before mid-year were discharged and were moved to a higher ranking class in their home school. (These children were viewed by the REP staff as having been enrolled in the wrong class in the first place) The practice of discharging children reaching on grade level was subsequently discontinued. It created the problem of whether to keep the child in his original class but have him retained in school while his classmates attended the center, while he wanted to attend; or to move him to a higher ranking class in the grade where so late in the year, he might not be able to catch up with the other children in the class in other subject matter areas.

Activities and Materials

As projected, twenty minutes of the children's time was devoted to work in the computer laboratory and twenty minutes to work in the skills materials workshop. One half of the 28 children in the class proceeded to the computer laboratory, and the other half to the materials workshop.

At the end of 20 minutes, they interchanged rooms. Classes reported during the entire school day including the usual lunch hour. Lunch hours at the center were staggered. The school day was divided into 16 periods; eight classes, two periods each.

The child's activities in the computer laboratory and in the materials workshop were programmed individually for him, based on initial testing and diagnosis, and day-to-day and week-to-week progress. Their activities were selected from day-to-day and from week-to-week by the staff teachers in conference with the staff educational assistants, with some assistance from the home teacher accompanying the class, and sometimes the home paraprofessional. Special effort was made to coordinate the activities at the typewriter and the workshop with each other, and with the home classroom program. This was done largely through the use of a common controlled vocabulary, mainly that of the Bank Street Readers commonly used in the participating schools. Vocabulary was also drawn from other basal systems, the Dolch word list, and from children's experiences and oral expression.

Most of the more than 700 computer programs available were created by the project staff, professional and paraprofessional, in the years since the project was established. New programs were prepared throughout the year and others were revised and improved. Members of the professional and paraprofessional staff voiced and encoded the new programs. The reproduction of drawings, pictures and text for exhibiting on the screen and window in the typewriter booths was also done on the premises. Mimeographed exercises for use in the materials workshop or in the home classroom were also produced. An on-location repair man kept the computer typewriter equipment in working order.

Operations were well organized in the laboratory. One educational assistant supervised two to three children in their individual booths. She withdraw the programs and slides designated for the day from the master file (each computer program is in a folder similar to the jacket of a long-playing record), placed the program and slides in the computer drawer, assisted the child if he ased for or needed help while he was at the typewriter, using Spanish when necessary. The child left the booth with a print-out of his typed work, another copy of which was for his record file. The educational assistant checked his reading of the material or asked him questions about it, testing comprehension. She recorded the child's progress each day and made other notes regarding his attention, attitudes, work habits, and other aspects of his progress and behavior. She observed the child while he was working. As he left, the educational assistant conferred immediately with the teacher in charge regarding plans for the next day and plans for the workshop.

In the materials workshops, the 14 children worked in groups of two to four, sometimes singly, under the direction of a staff educational assistant. Sometimes the home teacher or paraprofessional also participated. The children were grouped and regrouped from time to time on the basis of developing needs so that each group could be composed of children with common needs. A schedule of activities or exercises for each day of the week was provided each educational assistant. The educational assistant conferred daily with the teacher in charge of the workshops regarding individual children.

The two skills materials workshops were amply stocked with a great variety of cognitive and sensory materials, and technical equipment for promoting language, speech, and basic "readiness" and reading skills. Materials included concept games, puzzles, letter games, lotto, alphabet

poster cards, magnetic boards, scrabble letters, matching games, anagrams, spelling games. A Viewlex record player - earphone picture projector system was available. A Language Master providing immediate reinforcement of the child's voiced responses to printed words was also available, as were tape recorders, and overhead projector, and other devices such as the Edison Voice Mirror providing instant voice playback. Included also were picture books, storybooks, readiness materials, basal readers, workbooks, library books. Special materials were prepared such as word recognition exercises, concept development and comprehension tasks, visual and auditory perceptual discrimination exercises, and the like.

REP operated at a high level of efficiency. The 16 period schedule was closely adhered to by children and personnel. Except on rare occasions, the bus arrived promptly. Children arrived and departed, removed and donned clothing, and proceeded from laboratory to workshop or vice versa in an orderly, relaxed manner. In-between times were filled with personnel discussions of individual children's needs, problems, and progress, and future plans for them.

Problems Encountered

Among the problems faced by the project was insufficient staff time for producing new and improving existing computer programs. Lack of teacher time for writing programs has already been mentioned. In addition, in the opinion of the program coordinator, the previous year's quota of 20 educational assistants had provided greater time and flexibility for using the trained paraprofessionals for voicing and encoding programs, preparing picture slides, and performing other production tasks.

Much of this work was now being done by the professionals and paraprofessionals in the otherwise unassigned time or at home.

Insufficient personnel for program production was considered a serious problem by the project coordinator.

Another problem was the role of the home teacher while he was at the center. Some of the time he spent at the center was free. As noted, the teacher conferred with project personnel on individual children's needs, progress, materials used, or recommended. When a paraprofessional was absent in the materials workshop, the home teacher, sometimes the home paraprofessional, filled in. By and large, however, the chief function of the home personnel was to supervise the children in transit, to take attendance and to take charge of the general decorum of the children, supervising the removal and donning of their wraps and the movement of the groups from one room to another. The project coordinator and the professional staff were working on the problem, of how to make maximum instructional use of the home teacher and paraprofessional when they were not otherwise occupied.

Problems arose in the administration of the standardized tests the project staff was required to administer. Some of the children on admission, could not take one or both parts of the test. They could not read well enough, or they could not speak English well enough, or they gave up trying while taking the test. Part 1: Word Knowledge of the Primary I Test requires the matching of pictures and words. Part 3: Reading involves the reading of sentences and stories. Part 2: Word Discrimination was not administered.

The great majority of the second grade children, on admission could take Part 1: Word Knowldege, that is, with results within the normal limits of reliability for the test. Investigation of the grade scores

on this part revealed that of the group tested, 51 per cent scored 1.1, 1.0, or 1.0 -. The few children who could not take part 1 were therefore assigned a test grade of 1.0 in the later analysis of test results.

Most of the second grade pupils on admission could not take Part 3, involving the reading of sentences and stories, within normal reliability limits. The project staff administered Part 3 only to those entering second grade children who had done well on Part 1. The other children, the great majority, were assigned a test grade of 1.0 in the evaluation study.

Several of the entering third graders also were unable to take Part 3: Reading, but since their entering scores on Part 1 were a little higher than those of the second graders, they were accorded scores on Part 3 commensurate with their Part 1 scores. There were few such problems in June. Practically all the children could take both parts of the post-test.

Problems also arose in connection with the test-record keeping responsibilities of the staff. Children who were admitted to REP during the year, in some instances, did not take a standardized test because of the pressure of normal operations. Children who moved and were discharged during the year left the program without prior notice. Had the staff been informed, the children would have been tested before leaving. Children who were absent in the last weeks of June also were not tested. The test records for such children were, therefore, incomplete.

IV. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Observation and Interview Results

That progress was occurring at REP was apparent to the observer as computer programs and workshop activities gradually were stepped up in difficulty through the year. Home teachers reported that their pupils were moving through preprimer and primer levels toward the "first grade reader" or beyond (Bank Street). They noted that the children were learning, and that they could see the carryover of their learning into the classroom in vocabulary, recognition of sight words, reading skills, interest in reading aid in books, and general attitude toward school. Children's feelings about themselves were enhanced and their interest and motivation to learn was increased. One teacher reported that the program had calmed her acting-out "discipline class."

An observer could not help but be impressed by the pleasure with which children, virtually non-readers in September, proudly read the print-outs of the words and sentences they had typed. As some of the teachers expressed it, "The children are learning, and they are enjoying their learning experience."

The children confirmed their teachers' reports. Some of the children's comments in response to questioning were: "This place helps me read;" "It shows you new words;" "They teach me the alphabets (sic);" "I learn to type;" "They help us to read and write and study;" "You learn spelling words here;" "It helps me in school." (The center was not viewed as school by the children). Favorite computer programs recalled by the children were those with cartoon characters, human interest themes, adventure, holiday celebrations, and those programs produced especially for the children using their own words or including their own names or their names and photographs.

Asked to tell which of the two rooms they liked to go to better, many were hard pressed to make a choice, "I like everything." The majority of the boys selected "the lab." The boys and girls who preferred the project "classroom" said "It is prettier;" "I like the games and movies there;" "There are more things to do;" "I can write;" "There are books." A few children said they did not like to type, they did not like to be alone, or they were afraid of the voice. Others said they liked to be alone in the booth, typing was fun, you learned to read that way, they enjoyed listening to their own voices, they liked the stories and the pictures on the screen.

All in all, the children were enthusiastic about coming to the center. They also appreciated "the rugs," "the clean floors," "the pretty things on the walls." The center was a safe place to be in. "Nobody can break in and tear up your things."

The home teachers benefited from REP. They were grateful that the children were getting the individual attention they could not give and the materials they did not have in the home classroom. They learned more about their children's needs by being able to see them as individuals in a group with only one or two others, by discussing their progress with project personnel, and by receiving guidance and materials for use with individual children in the classroom. Needs and progress noted in the home school were reported to the project teachers. There was a meshing between the home and the project programs but problems of coordination did occur. In one case, for example, the basal reading materials used in the home classroom were not those used in the program.

While a large portion of the children's schooltime was devoted to REP (in actuality, at least 1 hour and 15 minutes, including preparations for departure and depending on distance and traffic), this expenditure of time and the management difficulties of adhering to a rigid schedule were,

in the opinion of the home teachers, worthwhile. The teachers, however, were not happy about their brief free intervals while at the center. Most of them expressed the desire to be of more constructive help.

Gains in Reading Test Grades, Grades 2 and 3

The pupil population whose test results were studied were the 201 children on the register of REP in June whose beginning and end test results were complete. The group included 128 second grade children 41 third grade children, and 32 first grade children. (Table 1)

TABLE 1

REP Enrollment 1970-1971

	On Register in June: Test Data Complete	Test Data Incomplete	Total	Discharged During Year	1970-71 Enrollment
Grade 2					
Boys	68	17	85	26	111
Girls	60	8	68	20	88
Total	128*	25	153	46	199
Grade 3					
Boys	19	10	29	14	43
Girls	22	4	26	7	33
Total	41	14	55	21	76
Grade 1					
Boys	17	1	18	3	21
Girls	15	1	16	1	17
Total	32**	2	34	4	38
Grand Total					
Boys	104	28	132	43	175
Girls	97	13	110	28	138
N	201	41	242	71	313

* Includes 11 alternates from other classes

** Includes 5 alternates from another class

These children had attended the center for varying amounts of time ranging from 19 sessions to 144 sessions.

There were 104 boys and 97 girls in the group. The composition of the group was 54 per cent Puerto Rican, 44 per cent black, 2 per cent Other. In this report, the results for the pupils in grades 2 and 3 are presented separately from the results for Grade 1. The results for the second and third grade groups are presented first (Table 2).

TABLE 2

Metropolitan Reading Test Grades On Admission, Grades 2 and 3

Reading Test Grade	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
2.3				1		1	1		1
2.2									
2.1									
2.0									
1.9									
1.8				2	2	4	2	2	4
1.7									
1.6	1		1	5	4	9	6	4	10
1.5	3	4	7	4	7	11	7	11	18
1.4	11	8	19	4	3	7	15	11	26
1.3	8	6	14		1	1	8	7	15
1.2	4	10	14	2	4	6	6	14	20
1.1	7	11	18	1	1	2	8	12	20
1.0	34	21	55				34	21	55
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2

The average reading grade obtained by the 128 second grade children on admission to the program was found to be 1.2 (boys, 1.2; girls, 1.2). The mean reading grade obtained by the 41 third grade children on admission was 1.5 (boys, 1.5; girls, 1.5).

The mean reading grades obtained by these children in June are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Pupils' Metropolitan Reading Test Grades in June, Grades 2 and 3

Reading Test Grade	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
3.8				2		2	2		2
3.7				1		1	1		1
3.6	1		1				1		1
3.5					1	1		1	1
3.4									
3.3									
3.2	1		1	1		1	2		2
3.1	1		1		1	1	1	1	2
3.0	1	2	3				1	2	3
2.9				2		2	2		2
2.8	2	1	3		1	1	2	2	4
2.7	2		2				2		2
2.6	2	3	5				2	3	5
2.5	5	3	8	1	2	3	6	5	11
2.4	3		3	1	1	2	4	1	5
2.3	4	3	7	6	4	10	10	7	17
2.2	3	2	5	2	1	3	5	3	8
2.1	1	2	3	1	4	5	2	6	8
2.0	3	7	10	2	5	7	5	12	17
1.9	9	12	21		1	1	9	13	22
1.8	8	10	18		1	1	8	11	19
1.7	9	7	16				9	7	16
1.6	3	1	4				3	1	4
1.5	3	1	4				3	1	4
1.4	1	1	2				1	1	2
1.3	2		2				2		2
1.2	2	1	3				2	1	3
1.1	2	2	4				2	2	4
1.0		2	2					2	2
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.0

In June, the mean reading grade had risen to 2.0 for the second-grade pupils (boys, 2.1; girls, 2.0) and 2.4 for the third grade pupils (boys, 2.5; girls, 2.3). In other words, the second-graders had gained, on the average, 8 months while they were in the program (boys, 9 months; girls, 8 months). The third-graders had gained, on the average, 9 months (boys, 10 months; girls, 9 months). Thus, the program met the first criterion set for it, in that "at the end of 9 months of participation in this project, the participants, most of whom began the program as non-readers and with severe language handicaps, will be able to demonstrate at least six months gain in reading skill as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test."

The project also met the criterion that "ten per cent of the pupils who remained in the program for nine months will be able to demonstrate at least one year gain in reading skill as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test." Ten per cent of the children gained, not one year or more, but one and a half years or more (boys 1.5 grades or more; girls, 1.4 grades or more). A total of 31 per cent of the second and third grade pupils gained one year or more (37 per cent of the boys; 24 per cent of the girls). The range of gains was from -.2 to 2.6 grades. These data are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Individual Gains in Metropolitan Reading Test Grades, 2 and 3

Test Grades Gained	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
2.6	1		1	1		1	2		2
1.9					1	1		1	1
1.8		1	1					1	1
1.7	2		2		1	1	2	1	3
1.6	3	2	5	1		1	4	2	6
1.5	2	3	5	1		1	3	3	6
1.4	4		4				4		4
1.3	3	1	4	1		1	4	1	5
1.2	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	3	5
1.1	5	4	9	2		2	7	4	11
1.0	3	3	6	1	1	2	4	4	8
.9	6	8	14	3	3	6	9	11	20
.8	7	6	13	3	3	6	10	9	19
.7	10	5	15	2	7	9	12	12	24
.6	5	6	11	1	3	4	6	9	15
.5	5	8	13	2	1	3	7	9	16
.4	2	2	4		1	1	2	3	5
.3	4	4	8				4	4	8
.2	3	1	4				3	1	4
.1	1	2	3				1	2	3
0		2	2					2	2
-.1									
-.2	1		1				1		1
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean Gain	.9	.8	.8	1.0	.8	.9	.9	.8	.8

The 87 boys in the program were found, on the average, to have gained one month or more than the 82 girls. This difference was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level, (Table 5).

TABLE 5

Mean Gains in Metropolitan Reading Test Grades of Boys and of Girls, 2nd and 3rd Grades Combined

	N	Mean Gain	S.D.	S.E. of Mean	Mean Difference	T
Boys	87	.90	.48	.04		
Girls	82	.79	.39	.03	.12	2.13

P less than .05

A difference of one month may appear to be of limited practical significance. The difference becomes important, however, when considered from the point of view that, under ordinary conditions, the performance of boys on reading tests in the early grades tends to be lower than that of girls.

It is to be noted that thirty six per cent of the children attended less than 100 of the 155 sessions scheduled.

Examination of the attendance records suggests that the more sessions the child attended, the greater the test gain tended to be. The children who attended less than 100 sessions gained, on the average, 6 to 7 months. Those who attended from 100 to 124 sessions (nearly half the children) gained an average of 10 months. The 19 per cent of children who attended from 125 to 144 sessions gained an average of 12 months (Table 6).

TABLE 6

Mean Gains in Metropolitan Reading Test Grades, Grades 2 and 3 By Number Of Sessions Attended

Number of Sessions Attended	Number of Children	% of Total	Mean Gain in Reading Test Grade
125-144	32	18.9	1.2
100-124	77	45.6	1.0
75- 99	32	18.9	.7
50- 74	18	10.7	.6
19- 49	10	5.9	.6
N	169	100.0	.8

The comparison of the citywide test scores of the third grade pupils in the program, and of third grade children in conventional classrooms matched with the REP children on sex and second grade citywide reading test scores revealed that, in the time between the second and third grade citywide tests, the REP group gained 5 months more than the conventional group. The 5 months difference in favor of the REP group was statistically significant at the .01 level (Table 7).

TABLE 7

Mean Gains in Metropolitan Reading Test Grades From Second to Third Grade, Citywide Surveys Grade 3, REP and Control Groups

	N	Mean Gain	Difference	S.E. of Difference	t
REP	26	.71	.48	.13	3.69*
Control	26	.23			

*P less than .01

On the April second grade citywide test, both the REP group and the conventional group had scored at reading test grade 1.8. During the following year, when the REP children were in the program, the REP group gained 7 months. The conventional group gained 2 months. In other words, the third grade group in the program gained an average of three and a half times as much in reading test grades as a comparable group in conventional classrooms.

Learning English as a Second Language

Another criterion for judging the effectiveness of the program was that "Spanish-speaking pupils in categories C-F will have a working knowledge of the English language and be able to read on primer grade level." In the opinion of the project and evaluation staff, a "working knowledge of the English language" was described by category C: "Can speak English well enough for most situations met by typical native pupils of like age, but still must make a conscious effort to avoid the language forms of his native tongue. Depends, in part, upon translation and therefore speaks hesitantly upon occasion." The majority of the Puerto Rican children in the program fell into this category and the results for these children are included in the general findings that have already been presented.

Also included in the total group studied, however, were 13 Puerto Rican children with initial language ratings of D, E, or F on the Board of Education scale (6,D; 1,E; 6,F). Of these 13 children, all but 4 were judged to have progressed to primer level, including the only third grade child of the thirteen, rated D, who had progressed to first basal reader, second half. The four second grade children who did not reach primer level had all been initially rated F on the language scale, "Speaks no English." These children had progressed to preprimer level. Their use of English also improved. In June, one was rated E, "Speaks English only in those stereotyped situations for which he has learned a few useful words and expressions." Two children were rated D, "Speaks English in more than a few stereotyped situations, but speaks it haltingly at all times." The fourth reached level C, "the working knowledge of English" stage.

Two other children who were initially rated F, "Speaks no English," progressed to category C, "working knowledge of English." The child who was rated E also progressed to C. Of the six children originally rated D, three moved up to the "working knowledge" category and three to category B, "Speaks English with a foreign accent, but otherwise approximates the fluency of a native speaker of like age level." Thus, of the 13 children rated D, E, or F at the start, 10 reached category C, "working knowledge of English," or better. These results indicate that the criterion for effectiveness was substantially met.

Growth in Attitudes, Grades 2 and 3

On the growth in attitudes scales which the home teachers were asked to complete for the individual children, the average rating for the children was good, rating 3. The mean rating for growth in motivation and interest in reading was 3.2 (Table 8).

The mean rating for growth in attitude toward self was 3.1 (Table 9). The mean rating for growth in attitude toward school was 3.2 (Table 10). The average rating for growth in attitude toward other children was 3.0 (Table 11). The average rating for growth in work habits was 2.8 (Table 12).

Thirty eight per cent of the children were rated very good (rating 4) or excellent (rating 5) with respect to growth in motivation and interest in reading. Thirty nine per cent were rated very good or excellent in growth in attitude toward school. Only 8 to 10 per cent of the children were rated poor (rating 1) on these two scales.

TABLE 8

Ratings of Children's Growth in Motivation and Interest in Reading,

Grades 2 and 3

	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
Rating	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
5 Excellent	14	18	32	3	2	5	17	20	37
4 Very Good	11	12	23	1	3	4	12	15	27
3 Good	22	7	29	9	11	20	31	18	49
2 Fair	12	19	31	6	6	12	18	25	43
1 Poor	9	4	13				9	4	13
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.2

TABLE 9

Ratings of Children's Growth in Attitude Toward Self, Grades 2 and 3

	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
Rating	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
5 Excellent	15	10	25	1	1	2	16	11	27
4 Very Good	9	14	23	2	5	7	11	19	30
3 Good	24	14	38	9	11	20	33	25	58
2 Fair	11	18	29	7	5	12	18	23	41
1 Poor	9	4	13				9	4	13
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.8	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1

TABLE 10

Ratings of Children's Growth in Attitude Toward School, Grades 2 and 3

	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
Rating	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
5 Excellent	12	15	27	2	4	6	14	19	33
4 Very Good	16	12	28	3	2	5	19	14	33
3 Good	19	14	33	7	10	17	26	24	50
2 Fair	12	13	25	6	5	11	18	18	36
1 Poor	9	6	15	1	1	2	10	7	17
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	3.1	3.3	3.2	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.2

TABLE 11

Ratings of Children's Growth in Attitude Toward Other Children, Grades 2 and 3 Means, Distribution of Ratings

	Grade 2			Grade 3			Combined		
Rating	B	G	Total	B	G	Total	B	G	Total
5 Excellent	13	11	24	3	2	5	16	13	29
4 Very Good	9	15	24	1	3	4	10	18	28
3 Good	20	13	33	9	9	18	29	22	51
2 Fair	15	13	28	5	8	13	20	21	41
1 Poor	11	8	19	1		1	12	8	20
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.0

TABLE 12

Ratings of Children's Growth in Work Habits, Grades 2 and 3

Rating	Grade 2 B	Grade 2 G	Grade 2 Total	Grade 3 B	Grade 3 G	Grade 3 Total	Combined B	Combined G	Combined Total
5 Excellent	9	14	23	2	3	5	11	17	28
4 Very Good	8	5	13	2	1	3	10	6	16
3 Good	16	8	24	6	10	16	22	18	40
2 Fair	22	26	48	6	5	11	28	31	59
1 Poor	13	7	20	3	3	6	16	10	26
N	68	60	128	19	22	41	87	82	169
Mean	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.8

Gains in Grade 1

In the treatment of the results for the first grade class in the project, the five alternates whom the teacher brought with her from another class were excluded from consideration as they had had kindergarten experience before entering the first grade. The comparison of the end-year test scores of the 27 REP children with the scores of the children in the comparable randomly selected heterogenous group from other first grade classes in the school revealed that, on the June test, the REP group scored an average of one month higher than the conventional group. The difference was found not statistically significant (Table 13).

TABLE 13

End-Year Mean Metropolitan Reading Test Grades, Grades 1, REP and Control Groups

	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E. of Mean	Mean Difference	t
REP	27	1.71	.26	.04	.11	1.59
Control	31	1.60	.32	.05		

In other words, on the reading test in June, the REP group without kindergarten experience did as well as a comparable group from conventional classrooms with kindergarten experience. The REP group had caught up with the latter group.

The ratings of the REP first grade children on the scales for growth in attitudes were very high (Table 14). On the average, the group was rated very good to excellent in growth in motivation and interest in reading (mean rating, 4.5); good to very good in growth in attitude toward self (mean rating, 3.9); very good in growth in attitude toward school (mean, 4.2); very good in attitude toward other children (mean, 4.3); and good in growth in work habits (mean, 3.3).

The highest ratings given the children were in growth in motivation and interest in reading. Seventy-eight per cent of the children scored 5, excellent. None was rated poor. The distribution of the 27 scores on the scale for growth in motivation was: 21, excellent; 1,very good; 9, good; 4, fair; 0, poor.

TABLE 14

Ratings of Children's Growth in Attitudes, Grade 1 Means, Per Cent

Distribution of Ratings (N=27)

Rating	Motivation and Interest in Reading	Attitude Toward Self	Attitude Toward School	Attitude Toward Other Children	Work Habits
5 Excellent	77.8	59.3	66.7	74.1	48.1
4 Very Good	3.7	3.7	7.4		3.7
3 Good	11.1	14.8	7.4	14.8	18.5
2 Fair	7.4	7.4	14.8	7.4	25.9
1 Poor		14.8	3.7	3.7	3.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9
Mean Rating	4.5	3.9	4.2	4.3	3.3

Follow-Up of Third Grade Pupils of 1969-1970

The criterion set for the follow-up into the fourth grade of the third grade participants of 1969-70 was that "75 per cent would maintain a six month or more rate of growth in reading." The fourth grade test results used were those available from the fourth-grade citywide reading survey of April, 1971. These scores were compared with the scores the children had made in the project at the end of the third grade. Inasmuch as the interval between the dates of these tests was seven months rather than the nine calendar months implied in the criterion, the criterion was adjusted from a six month gain in nine months to a five month gain in seven months.

It was found that 75 per cent of the children did not gain 5 months or more. Fifty five per cent did. The average test gain for the group, however, was 5 months.

It may be that the criterion set for the follow-up group was unrealistic. The criterion for the 1970-1971 participants was that 50 per cent of the children should gain 6 months or more, as is implied in an average. The criterion set for the follow-up group was that 75 per cent should gain 6 months or more. Had the same criterion been used for follow-up as for participants, the follow-up group would have been said to have reached the standard.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

REP of 1970-1971 met all but two of the five criteria set forth and, in the case of the two, the findings were a matter of interpretation. (1) The second and third grade children, as a group, demonstrated at least a six month gain in reading skills as measured on the Metropolitan Achievement Test. (2) Ten per cent demonstrated at least a one year gain. (3) The program developed greater motivation for an interest in reading.

(4) With respect to growth in use of the English language, no definition was provided for the term "working knowledge of English" and a definition was arbitrarily selected. From the point of view selected, the results in this area were judged satisfactory. (5) As to the question of whether the third grade participants of 1969-1970 maintained a satisfactory rate of learning to read after they left the program (in essence, the question investigated in the follow-up study), the standard set for satisfactory learning rate in the fourth grade was considered disproportionately high. Using the standard set as satisfactory for the children who were in the program in 1970-1971, the gains made by the follow-up group in the fourth grade could also have been considered satisfactory.

Some evidence was gathered in the study on the question of whether or not REP was more effective than the ordinary classroom in producing gains on standardized reading tests. The third grade children in the project were found to have made significantly larger gains from the second to the third grade citywide reading tests than a comparable group in conventional classrooms. The rate of learning to read of the third grade REP group was found to be roughly 3 to 4 times that of the conventional group.

Data were not available, however, for similarly evaluating the gains made by the REP children on the standardized tests administered to them at the beginning and at the end of the program. Their rates of learning in the program can, however, be compared with their rates of learning to read before entering, when they were in conventional classrooms.

The second grade children entered the program with an average reading test grade of 1.2. That is, their previous rate of learning to read had been 2 months in a year (or less than 2 months, since there were some nonpromoted children in the group who had been in school more than a year). In REP, they gained 8 months in roughly a year.

The third grade children entered the program with an average reading grade of 1.5. That is, their previous rate of learning to read had been 5 months in two years, or 2.5 months a year. In REP, they gained 9 months in a year.

These children, who had made so little progress in their previous years in school, gained an average of 8 to 9 months in the nine months they participated in the program; or, roughly one month per one calendar month. Their rate of learning to read while in REP closely approximated what is considered a "normal" or "average" learning rate: one test month in one calendar month.

Finally, one third of these children had attended less than two-thirds of the sessions scheduled. Thirty-one per cent of the group, regardless of attendance varying from 19 to 144 sessions, gained one full year or more. The 64 per cent of the group who attended 100 sessions or more gained on the average, 11 test months in 9 calendar months.

On the average, the first grade class without kindergarten experience caught up in one year with a comparable heterogenous group from the home school who had been in school two years, including kindergarten. In one year, the REP group advanced through both the "readiness stage" and the stage of beginning reading. The speed with which the program at the center was stepped up for this group in comparison with the pace followed with the retarded readers was noted by the project staff.

The pleasure with which the first grade children went about their tasks at the center even in comparison with the other children who also enjoyed REP, was readily observable. The attitude rating scales completed by the teachers showed that these children's growth in attitude toward reading, toward school, and toward themselves exceeded that of the retarded readers. For the first-grade children in REP, the program was developmental. They had not yet failed.

It should also be noted that the children in this first grade class could take both parts of the Primary I Reading Test in June, with normally reliable results. This was not true in the case of the second grade participants entering in September. The average reading test grade attained by the first grade group in June was 1.7. The average reading grade of the entering second grade pupils in September was 1.2.

On the standardized tests administered in the program, a statistically significant difference in gains of one test month was found between boys and girls. This difference, in favor of the boys, was considered important

as, under usual circumstances, boys in the lower grades tend to do less well on reading tests than girls.

Why boys should gain more in the program than girls is not clear. The advantage for boys may lie in the "Talking Typewriter." In addition, to the attractiveness of a mechanical object that he manipulates, it may be that the necessary attention he gives to the letters and words he sees, and to the words and sentences he listens to, helps to develop in impulsive boys a controlled, analytic, cognitive style. Extreme impulsivity is more common among boys than among girls.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Program

The specific reasons for the effectiveness of the Responsive Environment Program, 1970-71, cannot be determined from this study. What the factors were that produced the results is a matter for further research. There were, however, certain strengths in the program that should be noted:

1. The child received more individual attention than he could possibly have received in the ordinary classroom.
2. He received instruction specifically designed for him, individually in the typewriter booth, and as a member of a small group in the skills materials workshop.
3. The child received the supporting and rewarding attention of a number of adults - his lab teacher, his workshop teacher, the lab and workshop supervisors, and the project coordinator.
4. The paraprofessional staff was multi-ethnic in composition. In the case of Spanish-speaking children, Spanish-speaking educational assistants were assigned.

5. The presence of several educational assistants in the workshops permitted small groups of children simultaneously to use different materials appropriate for them. Without assistance, classroom teachers generally find it difficult to manage several such activities at one time.

6. The physical environment of the center was conducive to learning - the security provisions, the indirect lighting, soft-colored walls, carpeted floors, attractively decorated workrooms and corridors etc.

7. As part of the total program, the "Talking Typewriter" contributed to the children's reading performance. The Edison Responsive Environment Learning System recognizes the basic dynamic character of reading and learning to read. The "Talking Typewriter" invites the child to make the aggressive attack on printed symbols necessary for reading. His typing seems to force him to attend successively to each letter and probably encourages him to discriminate the salient visual features of letters and of words. His simultaneous hearing, typing, and seeing letters and words probably induces him to discover visual-aural correspondences. His concentration on the words he sees in the window, the words he hears, and the pictures he sees on the screen probably trains him in perception skills. It is probable that the "Talking Typewriter" helps the child develop or adopt an analytic, reflective, learning style in first learning to read. Since the typewriter is so programmed that he cannot make typing errors, and because he reads what he himself has typed, the child has daily ego-building success experiences.

8. The program was of particular benefit to boys. The advantage may lie in the processes of the Edison Responsive Learning System.

9. A diversity of materials for developing concepts, language, and reading skills was available for children's use. The materials, games, and equipment in the workshops exceeded in quality and variety those found in the average classroom, probably those found in any single well-equipped school.

10. The program seems to have had a positive effect on instruction in the home classroom. Home teachers reported that, when observing or helping in the workshop, they were able to see children's individual problems and needs more clearly. In conferences with the staff, the teachers received help in instructional procedures and materials which they used in the classroom.

11. There was enthusiasm for the project on the part of staff, home school personnel, the children and, reportedly, parents.

12. The program was conducted by a devoted staff of skilled, experienced, professional and paraprofessional teachers and supervisors, deeply concerned with children, and working cooperatively to improve children's learning.

There seemed to be some shortcomings in the program.

1. Although there is no unanimity in educational circles as to approriate procedures for early reading instruction, in the opinion of the evaluation director, the computer programs and the activities in the workshops were too heavily dependent on one basal reader system, in this case, the Bank Street Reader System. The Bank Street materials with inner-city content were adopted by the schools when REP was established in 1967 as the best choice at the time. Inasmuch as the children in the program had already spent one or two years with this system, and had done poorly, it would seem that different materials or a different approach might have been more appropriate.

2. Major dependence on a single basal reader system placed restrictions on the participating schools. One home teacher could not change to a newer, possibly better basal reading system along with the other teachers on his grade because his class was in REP. In the instances in which another basal reader system was used in the home classroom, the teacher in charge of the workshops prepared special mimeographed materials for home use so that the children would be prepared for their work at the center.

3. The computer programs developed from stories dictated by the children, or using vocabulary close to children's interests and experiences, or employing their name or photograph were few, and these were used mainly with children who were having difficulty in adjusting to the program. The programs of high interest to children were used infrequently (but these were the programs the children remembered).

4. There was not enough personnel time for writing and producing new computer programs.

5. Not enough use was made in the workshops of the games, puzzles, and other attractive, educationally sound, commercially prepared materials. Many of the lessons conducted by the educational assistants were of the skill-drill type that the teacher could employ with larger groups in the home classroom.

6. The children had little opportunity to select activities and materials in the workshops.

7. Homogeneous grouping in the workshops seemed overemphasized. Particularly in self-selected activities, children learn from each other.

8. Although the tables used in the workshops were slate-covered, little writing was observed. Writing as an aid in learning to read

seemed underutilized.

9. The child's typed print-out also seemed underutilized. Some home teachers reported further use of them, but they seemed to be used by the children mainly to show to parents.

Most of the criticisms listed above were discussed with the professional staff during the year, and suggestions for change were made. Some of these suggestions were accepted, and steps were taken to put them into effect.

Recommendations

1. REP should be continued, and extended to other schools. It would be helpful if such installations were contiguous with school buildings.

2. The six paraprofessional positions eliminated from the 1970-71 budget should be restored.

3. An additional teacher position should be established for full-time program writing and production.

4. Priorities should be judged as to whether REP facilities should be used for preventive - developmental purposes, corrective-remedial purposes, or for some combination of these.

5. REP should try to free itself from the control of any particular basal reader system.

6. More of the computer programs should be closer to the children's interests, and more should use the children's spoken or dictated language.

7. More use should be made in the workshops of the more challenging materials, and more of the activities there should be self-selected and child-controlled.

Manual writing by the children should be stressed to develop perception skills in reading, writing, and spelling, and to give kinesthetic reinforcement to the processes of the Edison Responsive Environment learning system.

8. Typewriters for children's use in the participating classrooms would be desirable.

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
HARRY N. RIVLIN, DEAN

Function No. 69-1-7454

EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION (CEC) PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"OPERATION READING SUCCESS"

Prepared by

JOAN M. FAIRCHILD
Evaluation Director

An evaluation of a New York City school district educational project funded by the New York State Urban Education Program enacted at the 1970 Legislative Session of the New York State Legislature for the purpose of "meeting special educational needs associated with poverty." (Education Law 3602, subdivision 11 as amended).

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

JOSEPH JUSTMAN, DIRECTOR

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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION (CEC) PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"OPERATION READING SUCCESS"

I. INTRODUCTION

Operation Reading Success was an experimental project operating in District 19, Brooklyn, and was designed to increase the reading competency of non-readers and poor readers at the fifth and sixth grade levels. The major objective of the project was the improvement of reading skills at a rate not possible in the regular classroom. This program utilized paraprofessionals as small group leaders in achieving this objective.

Operation Reading Success was conducted in seven elementary schools. Four of these schools were funded by Community Education Center funds and three were funded under Title I. Each classroom funded by CEC was composed of one teacher and two paraprofessionals. The Title I schools were limited to the teacher and one paraprofessional. The program was able to service 560 children during this year of operation. One-third of the children were able to return to full participation in their regular classroom during the year and the program was able to pick up another group of children. In each school, the special reading teacher and the group of paraprofessionals worked with small groups of 16 children for a one hour period.

The program attempted to accomplish improvement through a design where the first fifteen minutes of the hour were spent in the presentation of content through the use of a tachistoscope or controlled reader. Instruction during this portion of the hour was directed to the entire group of sixteen children. This large group was then broken up into three smaller subgroups, and the children within each subgroup spent the rest of the hour at one of three different stations. Two of these stations were manned

by paraprofessionals, and one by the reading teacher. Each station was structured to work with a specific aspect of the learning process. One emphasized phonics; one provided individual learning booths where children manipulated equipment designed to synchronize sight and sound in the presentation of words. The last concentrated on reading comprehension.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

As originally considered, this evaluation was to focus primarily on the effectiveness of the paraprofessionals working in the program. As such, the primary objective of the program was stated as follows in the request for funding that was submitted by the District:

1. To provide a special educational program to improve the reading skills of sixth grade students who would normally be retained in sixth grade due to their low reading scores.

Secondary objectives of the program were stated as follows:

1. To improve academic background through reading and to insure greater success in junior high school.

2. To develop a good attitude towards education and the educative processes.

3. To enable the students to be cognizant of their needs, and determined to alleviate them.

4. To develop an interest in and facility for reading.

5. To develop sophistication in the use of varied reading techniques and materials.

6. To provide a special program for children ready to enter the intermediate or the junior high school. This program will be taught by a skilled, sympathetic teacher whose total responsibility will be the upgrading of reading at this grade level.

7. To provide a program that relates reading achievement to the total personality of the individual and his growth in all aspects of language arts.

8. To provide a carefully structured reading program.

III. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Observations of the program were made in selected schools at several points during the year. The program was observed in operation and interviews were conducted with numerous people concerned with it. During late May and early June, questionnaires were constructed and distributed to each of the persons involved in the project. Observations concentrated on:

1. Program implementation
2. Use made of paraprofessional assistance

3. Effective use of reading program

4. Type of classroom

5. Effective use of physical facilities

6. Use of available materials

Questionnaires were developed for:

1. The program coordinator

2. Principals and supervisors

3. Teachers

4. Paraprofessionals

5. Students

Statistical data available to the evaluation includes testing done as a requirement of the State funding agency. While not all final testing had been completed at the time of this report, testing for one school - both experimental and control groups - was complete and did permit some "hard" data as to program effectiveness.

IV. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The program, as conceived, was fully operative during the past year.

A. Staff

The staff consisted of a coordinator, seven special reading teachers and eleven paraprofessionals. These persons serviced seven elementary schools within District 19, Brooklyn. The staff was chosen with great care. Teachers had a specific background in reading and were trained by the Project Coordinator and by Educational Development Laboratories to participate in this specially designed program.

The eleven paraprofessionals had all worked in their specific schools for a one-to-two year period as educational assistants and were especially

selected to participate in the program funding prohibited the use of two paraprofessionals and three of the seven schools. While the program and these schools operated with one paraprofessional, two were actually needed for smooth operation of the program.

Both teachers and paraprofessionals received some limited pre-service training and continuing on-the-spot in-service education by a most active project coordinator. The in-service aspects of the program also included monthly staff conferences for all members of the project.

B. Activities

Activities specifically followed the program designed for reading centers by Educational Development Laboratories as interpreted by the project coordinator and the teachers. In each school, four groups of students, sixteen in each group, met daily. The students were selected through a total testing program which used the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The children selected for the program were matched with a control group of the same number. Testing was done at the beginning, middle and end of the year. In addition to this testing, diagnostic testing was completed on the experimental group at each of the specified times. This included the Gray Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs Test and some specific phonics testing.

The selected students were then grouped into one of the four special groups according to level of reading ability and then sub-grouped for the different activities of the reading laboratory.

The program activities included a total group warm-up period with the reading teacher. This period made use of either the tachistoscope or the controlled reader. This period was then followed by three small group sessions, two of four children each, supervised by paraprofessionals and one of eight children supervised by the teacher. Each child rotated, spending one day in each of the three centers. The centers were designed to provide

specific input for the program. The group with the reading teachers concentrated in one of two areas - the tachistoscope or the controlled reader. The use of the tachistoscope was aimed toward achieving:

1. Agressive seeing - a high level of concentration.
2. Accurate seeing - The student wrote what he saw, resulting in accuracy and orderliness in seeing.
3. Rapid seeing - Using variable speeds resulted in a reduction in the number of fixations and an increase in the span of recognition.
4. Increased visual memory - increased speed forced the viewer to retain more of each single frame. As a result, retention and recall of impressions were felt to be more accurate.
5. The student strove for personal improvement - resulting in an increase in self-discipline and better work habits, with greater observance of detail.

The controlled reader was used with the aim of:

1. Fluency building - improvement of binocular coordination. Promotion of a left-to-right attack and elimination of regressions and fixations.
2. Controlled reading growth in ability to take in one to two words in an eye stop.
3. Increasing accuracy and rapidity in word perception through timed presentations.
4. Directing the visual intake - through left-to right control, creating a more orderly and organized perception.
5. Developing faster thinking and more rapid reading with increased comprehension.
6. Developing vocabulary growth.
7. Developing increased comprehension through the use of workbook exercises and discussions.

Each paraprofessional manned a separate learning center. Paraprofessionals were unquestionably a vital ingredient in this program. They acted as full participating members of the team and were given continuing in-service training in their specific responsibilities within the reading laboratory.

One paraprofessional was responsible for the "Listen and Think" center which was aimed at teaching and reinforcing a specific skill. Each tape was heard by the student, with specially prepared "Listen and Think" books, where the student recorded his answers. The paraprofessional previewed each tape, and manned the activity. "Listen and Think" worked on such skills as: sequence, inferences, visualization, main idea, etc. Each tape was dramatized and in story from with immediate reinforcement.

The other paraprofessional was responsible for the center which had as its main focus the use of the Aud-X. This was an extremely valuable reading tool, emphasizing the synchronization of sight and sound for: (1) attacking words, (2) phonics skills, (3) vocabulary building, (4) motivating interest in reading, and (5) comprehension skills.

In addition to these two major activities, the two paraprofessionals were responsible for supplementary activities which included:

1. Materials for developing specific skills.

2. Educational Development Laboratories study skills libraries with reading material in social studies and science, and reference materials.

C. Facilities

The facilities in each school consisted of a large room so constructed that it could be blocked off into two small and one large area. In five of the seven schools, the rooms were most adequate. In two of the schools the facilities were too small and quite crowded.

D. Materials and Equipment

The materials used in each laboratory served unique purposes and each was used with a particular goal in mind. Each center was equipped with:

1. Tachistoscope - a reading instrument whereby a preset speed (from $1\frac{1}{2}$ seconds to 1/1000 second) caused letters, numbers, symbols, vocabulary words to focus on a screen. Students then wrote what they had seen and rechecked as the element was brought back into focus.

2. A Controlled Reader - accompanied by carefully structured filmstrips and workbooks. A reading instrument whereby a beam of light moves in a left-to-right direction. Stories, letters, numbers, symbols, at preset speeds were used.

3. Each center also had individual tachistoscopes (Flash-X) and Controlled Reader Jrs. These were designed to be used by individual children at learning carrels.

4. An Aud-X which consisted of both projector and audio unit, plus an Aud-X Table electrically wired to accomodate 8 students and headsets, utilized high interest strips and tapes with adult concepts in all curriculum areas. Each strip presented a story with reinforcement exercises, followed by a strip emphasizing a specific phonics and word attack skill. Specialized workbooks accompanied the above material.

5. Appropriate filmstrips with corresponding workbooks for the machines.

6. Listening stations electrically equipped to handle "Listen and Think" tapes with earphones.

7. Study skill libraries in social studies and science, and reference materials.

8. Supplementary reading material to focus on specific skills.

9. Partitioned areas, so that groups do not interfere with each other.

10. Their own materials and equipment for duplication.

E. Problems

Few problems have existed in program implementation. Three are noted here:

1. Testing - the testing of 560 experimental children and 560 control children consumed a large portion of time. There is a need to think through the testing program and make some changes in the way it is conducted.

2. Facilities - Two centers operated in rooms which were inadequate due to size. This has been corrected for next year.

3. Paraprofessionals - Three of the seven centers were quite handicapped due to having only one paraprofessional instead of two. The paraprofessionals exercised a vital function in the centers and the total program, as conceived, could not have operated without the three staff members. The lack of a paraprofessional limited possible service to the students.

V. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Program effectiveness was determined in three ways. Two of these were directly connected to this evaluation. The third, statistical results, was a part of the program-run evaluation.

A. Statistical Results

These results were not a basic part of this evaluation. However, the effectiveness of the paraprofessional is intimately connected to the amount of change in reading score.

The testing program was not complete at the time of this evaluation. However, it had been completed in one school. The experimental group gained twelve months on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills while the control

group showed a gain of three months. The analysis of the reading scores of the other six centers was leading toward a similar finding.

B. Observation

The most striking aspect of the program to an observer was the positive feeling expressed by everyone. The school principal, supervisors, office personnel, teachers, the special staff connected with Operation Reading Success, and the children were all equally enthusiastic about the results of the experimental program. Classroom teachers reported marked improvements in reading and noticed a changed attitude toward school and growth in other areas.

The atmosphere of each of the reading centers was marked by the quiet intentness on the part of the children and the individual attention provided by the teacher and paraprofessionals. The program was totally operative and moved forward without turmoil. The use of on-the-spot inservice training for the paraprofessionals was attested to in one observation. Here the Aud-X center was being manned with skill by a paraprofessional even though it was in its first day of use.

In each laboratory one noticed the definite availability to all students of the paraprofessionals. Each acted as an independent teacher. They were available to children at all times.

Observation also showed the eagerness of the children. On all visitations they were observed to be cooperative and eager to learn. The independent exercises and study skill libraries were in use each day. The satisfaction felt by the children was evident in their faces, in the lack of absenteeism, and in the instance which several children came to the laboratory half-way through their lunch hour to remind the teacher that they were to do a specific activity and to ask when they should begin.

Some rooms were quite crowded and the loss of one paraprofessional in three of the programs meant larger groups and less variation in lessons than in the centers with three staff members.

C. Questionnaires

The results of questionnaires given to the program coordinator, principals and supervisors, teachers, paraprofessionals and children are presented below.

1. Results of questionnaires presented to coordinators, principals and supervisors:

Question 1. To what extent has the presence of the paraprofessional increased the skill of the reading instructor?

Answers to this question emphasized the use of the paraprofessionals as teachers. They stressed the in-service training of the paraprofessional and pointed out that the use of the educational assistant freed the teachers for small group instruction and for overseeing the operation of the laboratory.

Question 2. Do you see any marked difference in reading and other related areas since the initiation of the program?

The answers were an unqualified "yes." The administrators indicated that test results showed significant progress. They also pointed out differences in attendence, interest, confidence and an increase in ability in social studies, science and creative writing.

Question 3. In your periods of observation, supervision and evaluation have you noticed an eagerness to read on the part of the students?

Again, an affirmative response. The administrators stated that Operation Reading Success students looked forward to going to the laboratory. The students enjoyed the work, the variety, and were basically highly motivated by the program.

2. Results of questionnaires presented to the reading teachers.

Question 1. How did the presence of the paraprofessional assist you in improving the teaching - learning situation in your laboratory?

Answers stressed their use in small groups, providing individual attention, contributing to a relaxed atmosphere, handling routines, freeing the teacher for specific diagnosis and remediation and being particularly sensitive to the community-related problems of the children.

Question 2. Has Operation Reading Success helped the pupils in reading? If yes, How?

All teachers were highly positive. They indicated growth in reading scores. Special emphasis was placed on increase in word attack skills, speed and comprehension. Stress was also placed on improvement in other subject areas, on reading with confidence versus feeling insecure, and on the fact that children were presently borrowing more books from both the school and public libraries.

Question 3. What do you consider the major strengths of the program?

These were seen as:

a. The variety of material available to the children.

b. The complete break with the classroom type lesson.

c. The availability of the paraprofessionals.

d. The presentation to each child of numerous activities where he could meet success.

e. The absence of anxiety and tension.

f. Children knew they would receive one full hour of reading each day.

g. Homogeneous grouping in small groups.

h. The materials and equipment were highly interesting making motivation easy.

i. Instruction in the visual and perceptual skills that enabled children to make maximum use of the experiences they brought to reading.

j. Freedom to plan and pursue the program without interference of other teaching duties, and daily attendance by the children (in this school these periods were sacrosanct, to the exclusion of gym and assembly).

Question 4. What do you consider the major weakness of the program?

Several teachers indicated that there were no major weaknesses. Among those indicated were:

a. Some shortages of materials, such as workbooks.

b. In one school, a room that was not adequate to the needs of the program.

c. Too much testing.

Question 5. Has the program helped the pupils to succeed in other subjects?

All teachers answered this question in the affirmative. They indicated that interviews with classroom teachers gave proof of raised success level and of change in attitude toward school.

3. Results of the questionnaires presented to the paraprofessionals.

Question 1. Has Operation Reading Success helped the pupils in reading? If yes, How?

Again, a completely affirmative response. Reasons given were small group instruction, the variety of materials, that pupils now understand what they are reading and are able to read faster, and the fact that the classroom teachers report children who attended Operation Reading Success did improve in class and read with more interest and comprehension than before.

Question 2. What do you consider the major strengths of the program?

Among those listed were:

a. The variety of materials.

b. Small group instruction.

c. The staff relationships and interest of the coordinator and principals.

d. The counselling possibilities between teacher, paraprofessional and student.

e. The fact of communication with the parents which lead to their co-operation and interest.

f. Daily instruction.

g. Knowledgeable and experienced reading teachers.

Question 3. What do you consider the major weaknesses of the program?

The paraprofessionals as a group felt the program had few weaknesses. The few problems indicated were as follows:

a. Need for another paraprofessional in schools having only one.

b. Lack of enough expendable workbooks.

c. In some schools, lack of space and adequate furniture.

d. Too frequent testing.

Question 4. Do you have any suggestions to improve the program?

Suggestions included more expendable material, no interference during the reading period from such activities as dance club or assembly, the desirability of instituting the program with younger children, and the need for a parent workshop to inform them more adequately about the program.

4. Results of questionnaires presented to students who participated in the reading program.

Students gave an unqualified endorsement to the program and to the importance of the paraprofessional. All children felt that they had made outstanding improvement in reading. In answer to questions concerned with the help given by the paraprofessional, the students pointed out that this staff member had had time to give them individual help, that she, in comparison to their classroom teacher, was personally interested in them and worked to help them each day in many ways not directly involved with reading. One child pointed out that his paraprofessionals helped him keep out of trouble. The effect of small groups and consistent structuring was seen in each of the responses to this questionnaire. All children pointed out that their growth in reading was responsible for the fact that they were now doing much better work in their other subjects.

D. Summary of Major Strengths and Weaknesses

1. Strengths

The outstanding strength of the program was the totally positive indications of growth in ability to read of the children who participated in the program. This was one special program that showed a difference in what happened to children. Other strengths included:

a. The individual help and concern immediately available to children. That help and concern was not only present, but it made itself felt to everyone - particularly the children.

b. Small groups arranged homogeneously which helped to facilitate the greatest possible growth.

c. The dedication of the total staff. All connected with this project, perhaps taking their cues from an active and dedicated coordinator, worked very hard to see that the program was a success. Carefully drawn lines of communication which lead from the coordinator to the teachers and through them to the paraprofessionals kept confusion to a minimum. -

d. The importance of the paraprofessional cannot be overemphasized. This person was the back-bone of the program. Without her presence in the classroom the program could not have functioned.

e. The commitment to the particular program (Educational Development Laboratories) helped the project to achieve success. Careful training took place and all staff members were aware of their roles.

f. Staff conferences on a continuing basis which helped in orientation and in cross-fertilization of ideas through-out the program.

2. Weaknesses

Like the staff, the evaluator found little to indicate major weakness in the program. Some of the indicated problems are listed below:

a. The program, as conceived, needs a reading specialist and two paraprofessionals in each center. The lack of one paraprofessional seriously hampers the program.

b. Funds need to be allocated for more expendable material. The program is highly motivating and moves rapidly. Students must have materials with which to work.

c. Lack of an extensive pre-service orientation. While this is not a major problem given the present size of the program, enlargement of it will mean a need to create an understanding of the program for new staff members.

d. As the testing is present conceived, it demands too much time out of the year. A new approach to the testing program needs to be considered.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are four major recommendations which should be considered in continuing the program.

1. The program has proved its effectiveness in District 19, Brooklyn and should be enlarged and continued. Its continued success will depend on the maintenance of the present dedication and pcsitive orientation of the total staff.

2. Growth of the program will lead to a greater need for pre-service as well as in-service orientation. This should be considered as the program progresses into its third year. This in no way indicates that the present in-service training should be discontinued. This portion of the program is most effective.

3. The number of paraprofessionals used in all programs should be increased to two. This number is vital to the success of each reading laboratory.

4. Consideration of a different testing program. There are several facets to this that should be considered. One is that a sample rather than a matching number should be adequate for the control group. More improtantly, one of the major problems in special programs of this type is the maintenance of gain. The program should be instituted at the fourth grade level thus giving an opportunity for follow-up of the population for at least two years. In this highly mobile district, follow-up into another school is impossible, but children could be followed for the rest of their elementary school years. It is recommended that the testing program be largely confined to a longitudinal study of a group of fourth graders who receive a year of special help and are then retested during their fifth and sixth grade years.

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"PROJECT EXCELLENCE"

Prepared by

REGIS J. LEONARD
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An evaluation of a New York City school district educational project funded by the New York State Urban Education Program enacted at the 1970 Legislative Session of the New York State Legislature for the purpose of "meeting special educational needs associated with poverty." (Education Law 3602, subdivision 11 as amended).

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

JOSEPH JUSTMAN, DIRECTOR

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EVALUATION OF STATE URBAN EDUCATION (CEC) PROGRAMS

DISTRICT 19, NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

"PROJECT EXCELLENCE"

I. INTRODUCTION

This evaluation report is concerned with the operation of State Urban Education CEC Program "Project Excellence," in District 19 of the City of New York during the 1970-1971 school year. This project was a recycling of a remedial educational and supportive clinical program designed for elementary and junior high school boys and girls who had encountered serious difficulties in their scholastic and/or emotional adjustment in regular school settings. The project was designed to serve the specialized needs of persistent, "hard-core" cases, who, without the educational, guidance, and psychological services of this educational rehabilitation program might have been suspended from regular classroom settings. It was anticipated that approximately 600 elementary and junior high school boys and girls would be served during the 1970-1971 school year.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the program, according to revisions listed in correspondence dated August 3, 1970, regarding requests for funding submitted by the District, were stated as follows:

1. To diagnose psychologically and educationally the disabilities of each child through the services of a full-time psychologist.

2. To refer and/or place students within program or to outside agencies based on cooperative conferences between the coordinator, psychologist, and guidance counselor.

3. To provide educational rehabilitation of children in the program in that:

1. Each child will learn to work within a school structure.

2. Each child will learn to alter his social behavior so that he may be returned to a regular school setting.

3. Modification of behavior will take place as a result of:

a. In-depth supportive services
b. Small group environment
c. Remediation geared to disability
d. Continuous evaluation of each child through case conference method.

Pupil referrals to the program were to be initiated in the pupil's school, screened by the district office personnel, and recommended for inclusion in the program.

The instructional program was to be on the "self-contained" basis and was to include language arts, mathematics, science, physical education, and arts and crafts. Instructional personnel to be assigned to the project, according to the proposal, were to include a full-time coordinator, a teacher to be assigned as a "teacher trainer," and licensed teachers in the named disciplines. Each class was to be provided with an educational assistant. Supportive and clinical personnel were to include a full-time psychologist, two guidance counselors, and two family assistants for home liaison.

This instructional and adjustment program was to be flexible enough so as to provide for group and individual differences of the students. Parental (or guardian) approval for placement in the program and involvement within the program were considered to be essential.

III. EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Members of the evaluation team made periodic visits to the three schools prior to the opening of the centralized unit, and to the new building after its opening. Generally one visit each month was concerned with observation of the operational program; other involved conferences with district and school personnel, and the analysis of records. The evaluation team members examined the several official records concerned with intake, operation and student evaluation, observed each of the classes, and interviewed students, teachers, educational assistants, clerical personnel, and administrative and supportive personnel. Questionnaires were constructed for use with students, staff, parents, and teachers in school settings to whom "better adjusted students" were sent.

IV. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

From September through December the program operated within three different buildings; P.S. 328, P.S. 108, and the Arlington Annex. The latter involved use of a cluster of rooms in a community church building.

In January, 1971, a newly erected building (32K Annex) was opened. All students from the three settings were transferred to this center and additional students were accepted.

The new building, modern and functional, with new equipment and furnishings, had been designed for this type of program. The two-story structure provided cheerful, adequate classrooms, conference rooms for students, faculty and parents, a food preparation unit, administrative and clinical quarters, and a large multipurpose room. The extensive use of the multipurpose room as a cafeteria for three lunch periods and a morning breakfast limited its use for other purposes, such as physical education activities. The program had arranged for use of nearby school facilities for physical education and an indoor swimming pool in a community agency

The Students

In September, the combined enrollment in the three settings were 100. By January, with a new building in operation, a 50 per cent increase was noted. By May, the September figure had doubled. The declining figure for June represented transfers from the program. Throughout the school year, 80 students were discharged from the program. Thus the greatest number served was 283. The proposal had anticipated serving 600 students.

Throughout the school year the per cent of attendance ranged from 63 to 71, per month. Table I shows the official enrollment and attendance figures.

TABLE I

ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE, 1970-71

Month	Year	Enrollment	Per Cent of Attendance
September	1970	100	68
October	1970	108	70
November	1970	122	64
December	1970	124	71
January	1971	156	71
February	1971	183	71
March	1971	181	72
April	1971	180	63
May	1971	203	71
June	1971	176	

Students in Project Excellence during the school year were referred from 24 different schools in the district; 5 junior high schools, 3 intermediate schools, and 16 elementary schools. Table 2 shows that 8 of the feeder schools and one in particular provided the bulk of the student input and that these sending schools increased their referrals since March.

TABLE 2

REFERRALS FROM MAJOR SENDING SCHOOLS

School	Number of Referrals Sept. - March 4	Sept. - June 1
64	16	17
166	11	13
171	4	7
202	4	7
218	8	14
292	21	29
296	6	10
302	11	17
	81	114

Students received in the program were "hard core cases" in need of specialized educational and psychological services. This was in accordance with the proposal for the program. Educational test data presented in another section of this report describes the major educational disabilities of these youngsters.

Personnel

As provided for in the proposal, administrative, clinical, and staff personnel were assigned to the program. All assigned personnel were observed by the members of the evaluation team to the operationally active.

All personnel met the professional and personal requirements for their respective assignments; the proposal had not required teachers to possess specialized training in the areas of slow learning or emotionally disturbed students. As the year's program started, three of the teachers had training in special education. By the close of the school year six teachers had enrolled in graduate school programs in special education.

Except for two teachers who were released from the program near the close of the school year, the staff remained intact. Major staff changes will occur, however, at the close of the school year.

Personnel in leadership roles were considered to be especially capable. Key teachers were evaluated as good, others as average in their functioning. The latter group included some younger, less experienced persons who did show evidence of professional growth during the school year. Educational assistants in the classrooms and family assistants, community people, contributed positively to the program as they worked in their respective roles.

Activities

The activities of the operational program included those associated with the initial referral and intake process, the placement of the selected students in appropriate class groups, the instructional process, the continuous guidance and counseling process, the extracurricular program, the in-service program for both professional and paraprofessional staff, and the process of evaluating the educational and personal-social development of the individual students for retention or referral purposes.

As originally planned, students to be recommended to Project Excellence were identified by sending school personnel and screened by the District office staff. Upon acceptance in the program, the students were processed by the administrative and clinical support personnel. Intake was on a continuous basis; with the opening of the new building the intake numbers increased, as was noted in Table I.

Records were prepared by the sending school and the District office; data included educational, psychological, attendance, and social history. Educational records did not include sufficient objective test data. As will be noted again, because of the lack of such records it was not possible to conduct a pre- and post-test analysis of test data. Moreover, it appears that when the numbers of referrals to the program increased - after the opening of the new building - screening data from the District office and sending schools were less complete than before that time. More specifically, some of the more serious, complicated cases should not have been sent to this project as they represented disabilities beyond the current scope of the project and its personnel.

Project Excellence personnel arranged for use of the nearby East New York Medical Center. Students were referred for examinations, continuing treatment, and for emergency care. It should be noted that some students in the program were on medication, under the supervision of appropriate medical personnel.

One-page abstracts of intake records stressing basic identification data were made available for the child's teacher, the counselor, and the assigned family assistant. Other intake data were held in the administrative and guidance offices and were interpreted and explained to teachers as necessary or as requested.

The teacher trainer and assistant coordinator for the project interviewed the parent (s) of each child in the presence of the child during the intake process. Thus students and parents were fully oriented to the program. Routinely, the necessary parental approval forms were completed within this process.

The services of the full-time psychologist (technically, by BCG procedures, a four-day week) and the guidance counselors facilitated the intake process. Varied approaches to the diagnoses of the students were utilized as many schools were in the service area. The project did not service senior high school students.

As students were received into the program they were placed in an orientation class. Here the teachers and aide had an opportunity to talk with the student, appraise his readiness for the various general learning areas, and observe his social behavior on individual and small group bases. Teacher evaluations were combined with the more formal intake process evaluations, and the student was assigned to the class group which would apparently best fit his assets and liabilities.

During the first part of the school year, placement was based on the conventional grade level basis; exceptions were made as necessary and desirable. At approximately mid-year, after many conferences and study sessions, it was decided that placement should be based primarily on functional reading levels. Adjustments were made as the new building became operative.

The Metropolitan Achievement Test was replaced by the Wide Range Achievement Test and the Durrell-Sullivan Test was used as a confirmation and diagnostic test for reading. During this adjustment period one faculty member was assigned, on a part-schedule basis, to administer the latter tests to all students. This has been an incomplete, but continuous process.

In terms of implementation, the intake and placement process partially achieved objectives 1 and 2 of the proposal.

The instructional process in the several classes incorporated the fundamental elements of conventional teaching - learning situations and introduced innovations. Classes were small in size, 8 to 12 or occasionally 15 on register, with approximately 70 per cent in attendance at any given time. A firm, yet permissive atmosphere prevailed, but there were times when a student or a group of students became disruptive. The very nature of the student body and the existence of such a program for such students suggest that a certain amount of disorder was to be expected.

The short span of attention of the students and the limited educational achievements of the students were recognized by the teachers. Instruction was geared to the students and thus did not follow conventional unit or daily lesson plans. Guidance and socialization were integral pacts of the instructional process. Free time, games, field trips, walks, "cooling-off" periods, monitoring, tutoring and extracurricular activities were woven into the guidance-instruction process. Success rather than failure or penalty was the underlying motivating factor in the rehabilitation program.

As students progressed within the program, placement was provided in "transitional" classes. Here students considered to be nearly ready for transfer to regular school settings were introduced to the more formal type of education found in most schools. Intensive attempts to increase reading levels and guidance toward how to handle frustrating situations were stressed, as realistically this would be necessary for the "graduates." During this period, evaluation of the individual students involved the teacher, the clinical supportive staff, and the administrative staff.

The policy of Project Excellence was not to send a child back to his former environment where he had not registered success, but to allow him to experience a fresh start in a new, unbiased situation. The record shows that of 33 students sent to "regular school settings," only one was sent back to his original school. In this one instance, it was necessary because there was no other school available within the child's travel distance. Table 3, in the next section of this report, will show the distribution of the 80 students sent forth to date from Project Excellence during the 1970-71 school year.

If students were considered to be unable to cope with the educational process, they were retained in the program for further treatment or referred to an agency or institution. Project Excellence had no control over the movement of families and their children out of the district and thus out of the program.

In-school extracurricular activities involved the film theatre, a serving center, a dance class, music appreciation, art appreciation, a photography club, an African Club and a New York City Club.

These activities were scheduled; student attendance and participation were optional, not required. In general, this student population was not too interested in the many opportunities available. For example, only a small group of Black children expressed initial interest in the African Club despite the interesting and informative program and materials which included an introduction to the Swahili language and culture. Gradually, interest has been growing.

Out-of-school activities included field trips and swimming. The latter was a favorite of most of the boys.

This in-service training program for the Fall semester was formal and regular. Student sessions in the three settings were ended by approximately noon on Wednesdays so that all professional and paraprofessional staff members could devote an entire afternoon to a combination of (1) in-service activities and (2) some time for working on the clerical records and reports. The in-service programs included general information, administrative matters, demonstration lessons, and attitudinal training. Shortly after the opening of the new building, and a change in administration at the District level, this weekly schedule was eliminated. During the greater portion of the Spring semester the in-service meetings were not held.

A Student Evaluation form was prepared by the teacher-trainer, with assistance from key personnel, and used by the teachers. This four-page evaluation form provided for weekly checks on the individual student's work habits, emotional development, social development, personal health problems and traits, reading and arithmetic progress, and miscellaneous data.

The intent was to provide a continuous record and evaluation of the individual student. When the Wednesday afternoon time schedule was changed, the teachers, already on a full teaching and activity schedule, were not given school time for recording of this evaluation data. As the teachers balked at the additional task, and were supported by their teacher organization, the continuous evaluation that might have been afforded by the Student Evaluation Form was no longer available.

Facilities and Equipment

The new physical plant, with the exception of limited provisions for physical education and recreation, was considered to be excellent. Bright, new, and attractive, the school building offered more than most students were accustomed to in their own homes or in the immediate community. The new building included all modern conveniences and equipment. However, some of the equipment was slow in arriving, e.g., that for the woodshop and arts and crafts center.

Materials

General teaching and related materials were available and in use. The materials were diversified in terms of content and level. Some teachers indicated the need for additional specialized materials, especially designed for this type of student population. Teacher - prepared materials for class and extra class use were practical and relevant.

V. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The first goal of the program, according to the revised statement of objectives was "to diagnose psychologically and educationally the disabilities of each child through the services of a full-time psychologist." In the operational program, a full-time psychologist, working with the guidance counselors, the administrators, and the intake teachers did render a diagnosis. As mentioned in the section on implementation, the objective was partially achieved. The psychological data and the social data were considered to be good; there was a lack of objective data concerning the details of educational disabilities.

For example, the use of the Bender Gestalt provided technical data concerning the child's perception, and obviously was of value in determining if certain factors might be related to reading disabilities. There was not a consistent program to determine the nature and extent of reading and arithmetic skills and levels.

As the program developed through the school year, this deficit was remedied. The Wide Range Achievement Test was administered to newly received students. When the gross measures from that instrument suggested further inquiry, the Durrell-Sullivan Test was administered.

It is to be noted that although certain objective data were missing, subjective estimates were rendered by professionally prepared teachers and related personnel and used within the diagnostic process.

The second revised objective of the project was to place the students within the program or to refer them to outside agencies. This objective was achieved. During the first part of the school year, the team approach was used for deciding the placement of the students according to conventional criteria associated with grade level grouping. When the ad-

ministration and staff noted that the conventional approach to grade level grouping was not too compatible with reading instruction, because of the wide differences among the reading abilities of the students in a group, that plan was modified in favor of one which stressed functional reading ability. The newer plan facilitated the teaching of reading and spurred the movement to objectively appraise each child's reading level.

Placement to outside agencies was a continuous process throughout the school year. Table 3, which summarizes all types of discharge data, shows that 7 students were judged not to be ready for even the Project Excellence program and were provided for in the home instruction program. Six students were placed in institutions or hospitals; Youth House, Creedmore, Lincoln Hall, Warwick, and Jennings Hall. Another group of 7 students were referred to four different "600" schools. All of these referrals and placements were made after appropriate study and after the students had experienced a tryout period in the program.

The third revised objective of the program was to provide a program of educational rehabilitation that would result in student improvement. The ultimate test of success would involve the number of students who could be returned to regular classroom settings.

Table 3 shows the nature of the discharge of all students from the program during the period from September, 1970 to June 1, 1971. Comparative data are also provided for the similar data in the two preceding years; thus additional interpretations are possible.

TABLE 3

STUDENTS DISCHARGED FROM PROJECT EXCELLENCE

Nature of Discharge	As of 6/1/71	As of 6/1/70	As of 6/1/69
1. Moved out of district	16	10	6
2. To Home Instruction	7	4	0
3. To Institutions and Hospitals	6	4	1
4. To Elementary Schools	16	10	7
5. To Intermediate Schools	11	5	2
6. To Junior High Schools	5	3	3
7. To High Schools	12	3	2
8. To "600" Schools	7	12	6
	80	51	27

During the 1970-71 school year (until June 1, 1971), 44 students were returned to regular classroom settings. This number represented approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the more recent monthly registers. This number is more than double the number returned in 1970, and more than three times the number returned in 1969. For appropriate comparison, the highest monthly register in 1971 was 203, compared to 178 for 1970 and 64 for 1969. A followup of a sample of students returned to regular classroom settings showed that only one student completely failed to adjust to that regular setting and was returned to the program.

The families of sixteen students from Project Excellence moved out of the district during the 1970-71 school year; these students were released from the program. Mention has already been made of the students who were placed in situations other than schools.

As of the final school day of this year, approximately 100-125 students will still be enrolled in Project Excellence and be expected to resume participation in the program in the Fall.

Evaluation of Students Returned to Regular School Settings

A 25 per cent followup sample of the students who were returned to regular classroom settings was made by the evaluators. Teachers in the receiving schools were requested to respond to a questionnaire which included two sections of items: academic/scholastic/study habits; and personal/social/emotional adjustment. Each section included 6 items and a subsection score; ratings were on a five point scale from Poor, valued at 1 to Excellent, valued at 5. Twelve students were involved.

Three of the students were rated Good (4), in both academic and personal social areas. Two were rated Average (3). Three were rated Low (2), and two were rated as Poor in both areas. One student was not in regular attendance at the new school setting and could not be evaluated; one was returned to Project Excellence after a one-month stay in the school. Negative comments were made about 1 Poor and 1 Low students; each had again exhibited disruptive behavior and had been suspended for a five day period.

On the positive side, students evaluated as Average or Good received high rankings in the following items: progressive subject matter achievement, homework assignments, attention in class, respect for teachers and others, accepts responsibility. One fifth grade student received Excellent ratings in subject matter achievement and school attendance. A sixth grade student received 4 Excellent and 10 Good ratings.

The preceding data concerning the students who left Project Excellence and returned to regular classroom settings indicate that the proposal objective was partially achieved.

Student Self-Evaluation

A sample of the student population was surveyed by questionnaires to determine the effectiveness of Project Excellence as they perceived it. The instrument was a 20 question, self-rating form, which used a semantic differential scale of from 1 to 5. Two elementary school classes and two junior high school classes were surveyed; each level included one group of boys and one group of girls.

The basic results indicated significant change and improvement in the student's life related to school. The students tended to rate themselves less positively in areas which related to their homes and their personal-social lives. This was interpreted to mean that the most positive effects occurred in areas which the school could and did control, such as learning to read better and to do arithmetic better. Both groups indicated that since being in the program they attend school more regularly; that they are improving in their ability to read; that they have more confidence in their ability to succeed in school.

Both groups scored lowest or negatively in their ability to get along better with brothers and sisters; the elementary level group indicated they have improved their relationships with their parents. Least progress was noted in the areas of doing their homework, of volunteering in class discussions, in getting along better with other pupils in class, and thinking about their future plans and goals.

Generally, the results of the student self-rating of the values of the project indicate that strong and positive change has occurred in areas related to academic discipline and school behavior.

Parent's Rating of Their Children's Progress

A 20 per cent sample of parents was requested to respond to a 15 item questionnaire and indicate how much, if any improvement their children had shown since they were admitted to Project Excellence. Results were obtained from 33 or approximately 18 per cent of the enrollment at that time. Items were concerned with the way the child behaves with parents, with brothers and sisters, and with neighborhood children; with the way the child speaks of school, shows patience and self-control, exhibits characteristics of the better student, and the language used. Parents checked the amount of improvement as none, some, average, good, or excellent for each of the 15 items.

Parents were realistic in their responses and generally scattered their responses. Only one parent reported a very negative set of responses, checking no improvement for 9 items, only some improvement for 3 items, and average improvement for 3 items. Only one parent reported an extremely favorable set of responses, with 14 "good" and 1 "average" entries. The child rated "good" had been in the program for six months.

On 10 of the 15 items, the most frequent rating submitted by parents was an "average" amount of improvement by the child since enrollment in Project Excellence. On the remaining 5 items of the checklist, the most frequent rating was "good." These items dealt with getting along with teachers, with the children, expressed attitudes toward school, personal appearance, and language used.

Parents reported "some" improvement for 14 of the 15 items, but sparingly. Those items more frequently checked involved the language the child used, the way the child acted when criticized, scolded or punished, homework, and plans for work.

Two items of the checklist concerned with getting along with brothers, sisters, and neighborhood children did not receive any completely negative responses; yet the students had rated themselves negatively on similar items. The number of "no improvement" responses did not exceed 5 for any of the 13 items for which this type of response was reported.

A range of from 1-4 parents reported the highest rating, "excellent," for 10 of the 15 items of the checklist.

In summary, the preponderence of "average" and "good" ratings submitted by parents showed their approval of the progress the children were making as a result of enrollment and participation in the program.

Evaluation of the Instructional Process

Members of the evaluation team visited classes and reported their comments on a prepared observation schedule form. As previously mentioned, key teachers - generally the more experienced - were considered "good;" others were rated "average." There were some very high and some very low entries and comments for most of the teachers.

Observed discipline and control was rated average, on a five point scale. However, one-third of the teachers - and their educational assistants - were noted to have encountered some discipline and control problems with some boys and girls. As noted before, these youngsters were "hard-core" cases with previous records of disruptive behavior. In general, discipline and control were better with those students who had been in the program for a period of time.

Ratings on the physical environment of the classrooms ranged from lowest to highest, but still resulted in an overall rating of average. Climate of the classroom ratings were comparable to those for physical environment.

Teaching content was considered appropriate and necessarily varied with the needs and levels of the individual children. Some of the students, obviously not academically - minded nor motivated, did not consider the content to be of importance to them.

Most teaching methodology involved a one to one or small group approach, and was considered to be effective for short periods of time. The short span of attention of the youngsters was recognized by the teachers. Large or total group instruction, when used, was not as effective. Provision for practice of skills was considered to be adequate. Team teaching was evident.

The availability and use of supplementary materials varied among the several classes, from "some" to "plentiful." A cluster of teachers indicated a need for more varied materials, including audio-visual aids. Each teacher used some materials he or she specifically prepared for the group.

Ratings for goals achieved ranged from fair to good; most ratings were average. In some instances it was not possible to ascertain whether goals had been achieved or not; a cumulative acquisition was not always observable within a given class period. The comment, "slow but steady progress" most adequately summarized this element of the instructional process.

Student involvement was good; ratings ranged from fair to very good. Involvement was not always synonomous with progress.

Staff Involvement in the Program

Staff members, professional and paraprofessional, were interviewed for the purpose of determining their perception of their involvement in the development of the program, and their appraisal of the program, their understanding of the children, and their role in the program. Data obtained from the staff were recorded on a 15 item checklist form which also provided for other comment.

Most of the teachers felt they were highly involved in this educational and psychological program for this selected group of children, and that they were definitely involved in the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the program. They were evenly divided as to the progress the children were making in the academic and adjustment areas; some expressed extreme viewpoints, positively and negatively. There was also an even division as to their feelings of involvement in the team approach to learning and in the area of cooperation with the families of the students. The teachers expressed a need for greater cooperation with social agencies.

The Pupil Personnel Staff unanimously agreed that they were involved in the development of the psychological program for the individual children. They reported considerable cooperation with families and social agencies, directly and indirectly. They reported heavy involvement in appraising the affective growth of the pupils, but a lesser involvement in the development of the educational programs for the individual pupils and in the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the total program. Generally, they felt they were not too involved in the estimates of the cognitive growth of the pupils nor in the team approach to learning.

Educational assistants reported they felt they were highly involved in the development and in the operation of the program, but noted their roles as lesser roles in the team teaching operations. This group noted a need for greater cooperation with families and community social agencies.

Almost all teachers perceived themselves as having a high level of understanding of the students in the program, and indicated that they felt they had a good understanding of the program itself. Most of the teachers, 75 per cent, felt they had adequate backgrounds and preparation for this type of program. Most of the pupil personnel workers expressed a different viewpoint; they felt they were not highly prepared for this type of program. Teachers were divided as to their estimate of the effectiveness of the program, with one-third not responding to this element or replying in a neutral manner. Pupil personnel workers expressed negative reactions as to the effectiveness of the program. Educational assistants appraised the program as generally effective and all but one felt adequately prepared to work in the program.

At this point in this evaluation report it should be noted that there had been shifts in the morale of the staff during the school year. During the first semester, when the program operated within three different settings, morale and enthusiasm for the program were high. Possibly the Wednesday afternoon staff meetings were morale building as well as concept and skill building sessions. Shortly after the new building had opened, and a greater number of students were admitted, morale declined. Some staff members felt that the original, proposed screening policies had been violated and that the program objectives were being endangered. Also, during this period, there was a greater amount of disruptive behavior by some of the very impulsive pupils. As the school year was closing, morale appeared to be on the upgrade, though by this time some professional

staff members had indicated they would prefer not to return to the program in the coming year.

The Project's Testing Program

Recognizing the incompleteness of the objective educational test data, and recognizing the value of having appropriate information for before and after studies of the future, the staff of Project Excellence embarked on a standardized testing program. The testing program, not yet complete, has been a continuous process. Results verify the low academic standing of most of the youngsters, and confirm previous statements concerning the gigantic task facing the staff. The analysis was made by the evaluation team.

Project Excellence made use of two different tests during the school year. For the first few months the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) was used; later the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) was used, plus the Durrell as a backup test for questionable cases.

The distribution of scores that follow is based on 136 reading scores which were available; 75 scores from the MAT and 61 from the WRAT. This distribution combined both boys and girls, in elementary grades as well as junior high levels, on both tests. A student was considered "at grade level" if he obtained a score within one-half year of his listed grade:

Below Grade level:	123	students	or 90.0%
At Grade level:	10	"	" 7.4%
Above Grade level:	3	"	" 2.6%

Considering each test separately, the results in reading are as follows for the MAT, once again combining both elementary and junior high school boys and girls (total of 75 scores):

Below Grade Level: 69 or 92.0%

At Grade Level: 5 or 6.7%

Above Grade Level: 1 or 1.3%

The corresponding distribution for the WRAT, combining boys and girls in elementary and junior high school (for a total of 61 scores) is as follows:

Below Grade Level: 54 or 88.5%

At Grade Level: 5 or 8.2%

Above Grade Level: 2 or 3.3%

What follows is a more detailed analysis of each of the two reading tests used, giving a breakdown of scores for elementary school children, and, wherever possible and practical, for boys and girls separately. Since the overwhelming majority of children are below grade level in reading some attempt has been made to give a more specific breakdown on these scores.

MAT READING SCORES

Junior High School (43):

(A) Boys (31)

Below Grade Level (29)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 2

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 13

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 14

At Grade Level (1)

Above Grade Level (1)

(B) Girls (12)

Below Grade Level (11)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 0

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 7

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 4

At Grade Level (1)

Above Grade Level (0)

(C) Total: Boys and Girls Combined (43)

Below Grade Level (40)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 2

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 20

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 18

At Grade Level (2)

Above Grade Level (1)

ARITHMETIC SCORES ON MAT AND WRAT

This overall distribution of scores combines both boys and girls, in elementary grades as well as in junior high school, on both tests. Results are as follows (percentages are in reference only to those actually tested):

Below Grade Level: 98 or 99%

At Grade Level: 1 or 1%

Above Grade Level: 0 or 0%

Considering each test separately the results in arithmetic are as follows for the MAT, once again combining both elementary and junior high school boys and girls (total of 55 scores).

Below Grade Level (54)

0 - 1.9 ---- 1

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 35

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 18

At Grade Level (1)

Above Grade Level (0)

The corresponding distribution for the WRAT, combining boys and girls in elementary and junior high school (for a total of 44 scores) is as follows:

Below Grade Level (44)

0 - 1.9 ---- 1

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 22

4.0 - 5.9 ---- 18

6.0 - 7.9 ---- 3

At Grade Level (0)

Above Grade Level (0)

The students who were given the MAT were not the same ones who were given the WRAT, so a "before and after" study was not possible, even using different tests.

Elementary School (32)

(A) Boys (24)

Below Grade Level (22)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 7

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 15

At Grade Level (2)

4.0 - 5.9 ---- 2

Above Grade Level (0)

(B) Girls (8)

Below Grade Level (7)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 1

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 6

At Grade Level (1)

4.0 - 5.9 ---- 1

Above Grade Level (0)

(C) Total: Boys and Girls Combined (32)

Below Grade Level (29)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 8

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 21

At Grade Level (3)

4.0 - 5.9 ---- 3

Above Grade Level (0)

WRAT READING SCORES

A. Junior High School - Boys and Girls combined: (30)

Below Grade Level (28)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 2

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 11

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 15

At Grade Level (1)

R.G. = 8.5

Above Grade Level (1)

R.G. = 10.2

B. Elementary School (31)

Below Grade Level (26)

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 6

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 14

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 6

At Grade Level (4)

Above Grade Level (1)

C. Junior High and Elementary Combined (61)

Below Grade Level

Non-reader - 1.9 ---- 8

2.0 - 3.9 ---- 25

4.0 - 6.9 ---- 21

At Grade Level (5)

Above Grade Level (2)

Major Strengths of the Project

The strengths of Project Excellence included the following:

1. The sound concept of providing a specialized program of educational and psychological rehabilitation for a group of youngsters who could not or would not adjust to regular school settings. The operational program is still in a changing state, as expected.

2. The recruitment and assignment of capable and personable key professional personnel; especially the coordinator, the teacher trainer who also served as an assistant to the coordinator, the clinical staff and experienced classroom teachers. This group, serving as a nucleus was able to implement the program.

3. The recruitment and assignment of educational assistants from the community, who in addition to serving some of the immediate needs of the teachers, the children and their parents, were instrumental in initiating and maintaining community relations.

4. The servicing of a selected group of students who were, as the proposal provided, in need of specialized assistance. As has been noted, the selection process during the first part of the school year was superior to that for the second half of the year.

5. The intake and placement activities which provided, insofar as possible, individualized attention to the students.

6. The in-service program for both professional and paraprofessional staff members during the first half of the school year.

7. The newly erected facility with modern conveniences and equipment.

8. The instructional process which was integrated with the guidance process, and which the evaluators considered to be partially effective.

9. The distribution of students, after some training, to regular school settings, home instruction, institutions and hospitals, and special schools. While the number sent to regular school settings was not as high as anticipated, those who were returned established a reasonable record.

10. The insights developed by the students, as was revealed in a survey of a sample group.

11. The staff and parental reactions to the program which were basically favorable.

12. The nature and extent of staff involvement in the many aspects of the operational program.

13. The sincere attempt by the administrators to obtain objective educational test data.

14. The cooperation of most staff members in a most difficult situation servicing a most difficult group of youngsters.

Major Limitations

The major limitations, as noted by the evaluators, included the following:

1. The overly ambitious statement in the proposal, which anticipated servicing 600 children during the school year. As was noted in the preliminary report, and again in this report, this group of youngsters is a most difficult, severely handicapped group in need of even more than the type of educational and rehabilitation services which has been provided; and for a longer period of time.

2. The shifts in staff morale which were related to shifts in the operational program, and which could be related to future staff changes.

3. The elimination of the five in-service program which had operated during the first part of the school year.

4. The relatively small number of staff members who had specialized training and experience in the areas of slow learning students and socially disturbed students.

5. The lack of facilities, within the building, for physical education activities and energy releasing recreational activities.

6. The need for more specialized teaching materials, including educational games and various audio-visual aids.

7. The need for more objective educational test data.

8. The need for continuous, recorded evaluations of the progress of each child. A plan had been developed for this but was not implemented, as has been noted.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Project Excellence, a recycled project, is completing its third year of operation. During the 1970-71 school year the program has achieved some of its objectives and is making progress toward achievement of others. In general, the program has assisted students who have encountered serious difficulties in regular school settings. This program is making a valuable contribution, and should be recycled. Some recommendations are made for consideration by program planners:

1. The broad concept of educational and psychological rehabilitation underlying Project Excellence should be subjected to intensive study and review. Consideration of the strengths and weaknesses, together with the problems encountered, should provide better bases for redefining objectives, processes, and goals.

2. The anticipated number of students to be serviced during a school year should be reduced. These seriously disabled students, many with long histories of unadjustment, require a longer period of remedial and rehabilitation services.

3. Redefined guidelines should be developed in reference to the type of cases referred and the nature of the referral and screening process. District personnel and their resource personnel should continue to provide the basic referral process but with greater involvement of project personnel.

4. Provisions should be made for reinstatement of the in-service program. Administrators might wish to explore the possibilities of collaboration with a college or university for a more formal program of in-service activities along the lines of the newer programs for certification of teachers of the emotionally disturbed.

5. Definite and realistic plans should be developed for the periodic evaluation of the progress of each child during his stay in the program. Essential data have been identified and one form has been developed for the recording and use of the information, but implementation plans need to be initiated and maintained.

6. The standardized testing program being conducted by project staff should be continued; these data should be integrated with other data already available.

7. Physical education and energetic recreation activities should be expanded; the current sedentary activities have value but do not provide for sufficient release of physical energy for this type of student population.

8. Staff morale, once high, needs to be bolstered. Consideration might be given to the development of an experimental program involving the entire staff. For example, under reasonably controlled conditions, some of the behavior modification strategies suggested by Glasser (Reality Therapy and Schools Without Failure) or Krumboltz and Thoresen (Behavioral Counseling) could be included in the program.